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Local Government Service

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A GREAT EXPERIMENT

N.A.L.G.O. AS DEFENDER OF A LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM

By Professor Harold J. Laski

AN ignorance of the achievement of local government is one of the most profound political characteristics of the British people. They are unaware of the miracles it has performed; most of them are not even interested enough in its processes to vote for their elected representatives. Yet, in less than a century, the system of local government has been transformed from a cesspool of nepotism and corruption into a system whose technical competence compares favourably with that of any other country. Only in Germany, perhaps, has municipal trading been so successful. Its schools, its sanitation, its transport, its care for the standards of public health, many of its libraries, some of its housing schemes, the feats performed by its engineers in water-supply, gas and lighting, all in all, represent an epic in public service.

Work for its Own Sake

And the essence of this system lies in the work of a great army of public officials most of whom remain wholly unknown to the general public. The Mayor and Corporation have their brief hour of ceremonial dignity; the men on whom the service really depends are largely screened from the public view. They are rarely well paid; the ordinary dignities of political life more rarely still come their way. They bear the brunt of public grumbles; and their position deprives them of the possibility of reply. What credit attaches to the quality of their performance is mostly reserved for the elected councillor; the official must be content with the knowledge of a big work well done for its own sake.

Ignorance in Local Government

The ignorance of the public would not, perhaps, matter greatly were it not that it interferes with the possibility of an adequate achievement in local government. It does not matter if the crowd has not heard of a great philosopher or an eminent mathematician; he can still do his philosophy or his mathematics without loss to his subject. But ignorance about government has grave consequences, because the quality of its performance depends upon understanding of its achievement. There are always men prepared to attack the expenditure upon public objects. They think that good government means cheap government. They resent the noble school, the fine housing scheme, the cheap municipal electricity supply. The infantile death rate may be halved in a generation; they only insist that the rates have gone up. The beginnings of a really educated democracy may be visible; they only realise that the poor receive benefits for which the rich are paying. They take every opportunity to magnify error in administration. They attack every creative scheme as extravagant. They draw constant pictures of a great army of useless officials battening upon the ratepayer. If they can only move towards an attack upon the foundations of this great adventure, they feel that they will not have lived in vain.

PROFESSOR HAROLD LASKI

Mr. Harold J. Laski, to whom we are indebted for a striking appreciation of N.A.L.G.O.'s work, is Professor ofPolitical Science at the University of London. A distinguished political economist, Mr. Laski was born at Manchester and educated at the Manchester Grammar School and New College Cambridge. He was successively Lecturer in History at McGill, Harvard, and Yale universities, and Ward Beecher Lecturer at Amherst College, and since 1920 has been connected with the London School of Economics. By his membership of several Government Committees, notably the Departmental Committee on Local Government, 1931, and his several books on the subject, Mr. Laski has come to be regarded as an authority on local government in all its phases.

For Private Gain

Because a grave economic crisis is on us, the advocates of futile economy have been able to take the offensive; and no one who studies their campaign can doubt that they propose to take full advantage of public ignorance. Unless their effort is attacked at its root they may well be able seriously to undermine the essential quality of our local government system; for, if they have their way—and their appetite grows by what it feeds on—private gain instead of public need will again become the standard of its performance.

N.A.L.G.O. Information Bureau

The news, therefore, that N.A.L.G.O. proposes to finance upon a large scale a Bureau of Information upon local government work is of great public importance. It is, in the first place, a salutary innovation that a professional body should be disinterested enough to seek to inform the public upon its own problems; that is an example which might well be imitated elsewhere. It is, in the second place, invaluable to have a central bureau which can seek, not only negatively to disperse the clouds of misinformation which the so-called economists spread, but, also, more positively to create enlightenment among the electorate about what it owes to local government and the great opportunities implicit in its further development. It is, thirdly, a great step forward to have a centre, independent of the ordinary political agencies, round whose

standard can gather all those who realise that it is upon the advance, and not the arrest, of present tendencies in local government that our national progress depends.

Creating Public Opinion

Opportunities for such a bureau are endless. If only, to take an obvious example, it had been able to create a public opinion upon the subject, Lord Hartington and his friends would not have been able to destroy the great possibilities of the recent Town Planning Act. If we could only have a national tabulation of the results of the scholarship system as now practised by all enlightened local authorities, no one would dare to propose the cutting down of the present meagre standards of secondary education. If the reality of the slum problem could only be brought home on a national scale we should not have 300,000 unemployed in the building trades. Such a bureau, by careful work, could do much to call into a new existence that local civic pride which should be expressing itself in initiative for the public good. There are innumerable things a good local authority can do, if only there is an alert and eager public opinion behind it. And if, as I hope, one of the results of N.A.L.G.O.'s experiment is the slow dawn upon the electorate of a realisation of what it owes to the officials in the local government service, that alone would be a great step forward.

At no time in our national life has their work been more complex or more important; at no time has it been more important to attract to its service minds as able as the country possesses. That is impossible under present conditions for many reasons; not least, because of the "economist's" way of depreciating its achievements at every possible opportunity. A career in local government offers the prospect of magnificent adventure to any creative mind; and its achievements have a permanent effect.

High Professional Zeal

If N.A.L.G.O.'s experiment can bring this home, it may open a new epoch in the life-history of British democracy. For it may then teach the citizen that the achievements of the State are a function of his direct and personal interest in its concerns; that it can reap only what he has sown. I learn with proud excitement of N.A.L.G.O.'s purpose—pride because this seems to me an example of professional zeal at its highest, and excitement because, if it succeeds, new and wider horizons of good may open out of the immediately dark prospect before us.

ECONOMY—AT A PRICE

How is economy to be achieved? This question was met by Mr. R. Bryce Walker, Joint County Clerk of Lanarkshire, in the course of an address at Glasgow. As an official of thirty years' experience he was not prepared to admit that local government was run extravagantly. He was not satisfied that any saving in the matter of wages would substantially lighten the burden of the general ratepayer. Nor could it be seriously contended that the chief departmental officials of larger authorities were paid unduly high rates of remuneration.

Inferior Workmanship

Nothing was so costly in the end as to employ inferior brains in professional or technical work, Mr. Bryce Walker added, and good men should be well paid. It was only by spending less on the public services that a local authority could economise, but the people were so accustomed to the existing standard of local government administration that they would resent any lowering of it.

Road economy, he went on to say, could be achieved only by providing inferior roads, which would at once lead to an outcry. To stop further expansion of the Public Health service would result in losing the benefit of the results of medical research, and he doubted whether the public would tolerate a lower standard of medical service.

Concluding, Mr. Bryce said the question of achieving substantial economies was by no means the easy matter that some people assumed it to be. There was no easy road to economy, and if any real reduction of rates was to be achieved they would have to make up their mind to accept lower standards of public service than they had been accustomed to. Was the public prepared for that? Local government officers realised the situation, but they trusted that the public did not think that all the economies required could be further attained by lessening employees' remuneration. If that were attempted they would be bitterly disappointed by the result.

A SUPERANNUATION QUERY

DEFINITION OF "UNDERTAKERS"

A question arose as to whether an officer of a Joint Town Planning Committee established under the Town Planning Act, 1925, could be admitted to a superannuation scheme under Section 5 (3) (b) of the Local Government and Other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922, which provides that any local authority to which the Act applies may, on such terms and conditions as they think fit, and with the approval of the Minister of Health, admit any officers or servants of any undertakers exercising any of their powers within the area of the local authority under any Act of Parliament or any Order having the force of an Act, to participate in the authority's superannuation scheme.

The Association submitted the question to the Ministry of Health, who were also asked to say what bodies are, in their opinion, covered by the expression "undertakers" in the abovementioned sub-section, there being no definition of "undertakers" in the Act.

The Ministry replied that, having regard to the applied provisions of Section 57 of the Local Government Act, 1894, the department would not regard a Joint Town Planning Committee established under the Town Planning Act, 1925, as competent to enter into an agreement under Section 5 (3) (b) of the Act of 1922. The Ministry also stated that they had regarded the following bodies as "undertakers" whose officers and servants could be admitted to the benefits of the Act by means of an agreement under Section 5 (3) (b):—River Weaver Navigation Trustees, Felixstowe Dock and Railway Company, Delancey Hospital Trust, Fleetwood Gas Company and Prescot Gas Company.

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LAW OF LIBEL AND SLANDER

WHAT ARE DEFAMATORY AND ACTIONABLE STATEMENTS?

BY THE LEGAL SECRETARY

FREQUENTLY Headquarters receives letters from members with reference to statements made about them—usually by a member of a local authority or a ratepayer, or in a local newspaper—which are thought to be libellous or slanderous, and asking the Association to commence legal proceedings on their behalf against the person or persons who made the statement complained of.

In some cases, even before he has communicated with the Association, the member has written to the person who made the statement complained of, saying, "I am placing my case in the hands of N.A.L.G.O., who will take legal action on my behalf." On the case being gone into, it has been found that the statement is not actionable. Therefore, when a member has a statement made about him which he thinks amounts to libel or slander his first step should be to consult the Association through the channel of his local Branch.

In many instances, the words complained of, although grossly unfair or even quite untrue, are not actionable. It is hoped that the following brief account of the Law of Libel and Slander will give members some idea of what statements are defamatory and actionable.

DEFINITIONS

Any written or printed words which tend to lower a person in the estimation of right-thinking men or cause him to be shunned or avoided or expose him to hatred, contempt, or ridicule, constitute a libel.

If the disparagement is expressed in some fugitive form, such as spoken words, sounds, looks, signs or gestures, it is called slander.

To amount to a libel the words must tend to lower the plaintiff in the estimation of society generally. If the words only tend to bring the plaintiff into odium, ridicule, or contempt with a particular class or section of society they are not libellous.

A libel need not necessarily take the form of written or printed words; it is sufficient if it be recorded in any form of a more or less permanent nature; e.g., picture, photograph, cartoon, or caricature.

PUBLICATION

Libel.—A defamatory statement does not become a libel unless it is expressed in writing or some permanent form. Merely writing a libel is not publication, and even the delivery of a libel to a person is not sufficient publication if he does not become aware of the defamatory statement. Publication consists of making known the defamatory statement after it has been reduced into some permanent form. If it is made known to a third person there is sufficient publication to support an action. If the statement is sent straight to the person of whom it is made and is communicated to him alone such publication will not support an action, though it may sustain an indictment because it provokes, or has a tendency to provoke, a breach of the peace. Although as a general rule the writer of a libel is not liable civilly if he addresses it to the plaintiff himself, yet if he addresses it to the plaintiff knowing or having reason to know that it is likely to be opened and read before it reaches the hands of the plaintiff and it is so opened and read, the defendant is liable as the publisher.

Slander.—A person publishes a slander of the plaintiff who speaks words slanderous of the plaintiff to or in the presence of a third person who hears them and understands them in a sense slanderous of the plaintiff.

DEFENCES

(i) *Justification.*—To establish a plea of justification the defendant must prove that the imputation complained of is true. It is a complete defence to a civil action of libel or slander that the imputation complained of is true. It is not necessary for the defendant to prove the truth of every word of the libel. It is sufficient for the substance of the libellous statement to be justified. The Select Committee of the House of Lords appointed in 1843 to consider the law of defamation and libel expressed their opinion that the law was defective in permitting the truth of the imputation by itself to be an absolute bar to a civil action. They considered that there were many cases in which a wrong might be maliciously done to an individual by making public what might be true, as where the imputation referred to some personal defect or error of conduct long since atoned for and forgotten, and that a remedy should be given for such a wrong. They recommended that the truth of the imputation should not be an absolute defence to an action of libel or slander unless it was proved that it was for the benefit of the community that the truth should be made known. This recommendation was not adopted except in so far as criminal proceedings for libel are concerned. By Section 6 of Lord Campbell's Libel Act, 1843, truth is not a defence to criminal proceedings unless it was for the public benefit that the statement was made.

(ii) *Absolute privilege.*—Absolute privilege attaches to the following statements:—

(1) Made in the course of judicial or quasi judicial proceedings.

(2) Contained in documents made in judicial or quasi judicial proceedings.

(3) Made by one Officer of State to another in the course of his official duties.

(4) Made in the course of parliamentary proceedings.

(5) Contained in reports published by order of either House of Parliament.

(iii) *Qualified privilege.*—Qualified privilege is a defence only to the extent that it throws on the plaintiff the burden of proving express malice. Directly the plaintiff succeeds in doing this the defence vanishes and it becomes immaterial that the publication was on a privileged occasion. Qualified privilege attaches to (*inter alia*): Statements made by the defendant in the discharge of a public duty. Statements made on a special matter in which both the defendant and the person to whom the statements are made have a legitimate common interest. Reports of parliamentary or judicial proceedings. Reports in a newspaper of proceedings at public meetings.

Character of servants.—It is the moral and social duty of an employer on an inquiry being made by an intending employer as to the character, fitness, or capacity of a servant, or as to the cause of his dismissal, to state all that he knows either for or against the servant, and if he does so honestly and without malice towards the servant his answer will be privileged.

Statements as to misconduct of persons in public authority.—It is the duty of everyone in the interests of public efficiency and good order to bring

any misconduct or neglect of duty on the part of a public officer or employee, or any public abuse, to the notice of the proper Authority for investigation. Any complaint or information as to misconduct, neglect of duty, or abuse, though volunteered, is privileged, provided it is made in good faith to the person or body who has the power or duty to remove, punish, or reprimand the offender.

A common interest.—A qualified privilege on the ground of common interest in the subject matter of the communication has been held to attach to the following: A statement made by a master to his servant as to the character of a fellow servant in his employ, or by a servant to his master as to the character of a fellow servant in the master's employ. A statement by a Medical Officer of a school to its Steward as to the quality of the meat supplied by a butcher to the school. A statement by an employer to an Insurance Company as to alleged defalcations by an employee whose honesty has been guaranteed by the Company. A statement made by the Clerk of a Board of Guardians to the Board as to the alleged neglect of duty and insubordination of an Assistant Clerk, or to the Relieving Officer of the Union as to the alleged neglect of duty of a Medical Officer. A statement by a member of a Board of Guardians at a meeting of the Board objecting to payments being made to their Medical Officer on the ground of alleged defalcations. A statement of a ratepayer concerning the Parish Constable and his accounts made to a fellow ratepayer, or at a meeting of the ratepayers called to investigate such accounts. A statement made by a member of any public body at a meeting of the body material and pertinent to the matter legitimately under discussion before it. A Town Council is a typical instance of a public body, the members of which enjoy a privilege in the language they use in dealing with public affairs of the borough. A Town Councillor is entitled to speak freely upon the way in which the duties which are under the supervision of the Council are discharged, but privilege will not attach to any statement which is irrelevant to the matter under discussion at the meeting.

Reports of proceedings.—A fair and accurate report of any debate or proceeding in either House of Parliament or in any Committee thereof is privileged. For a report of judicial proceedings to be privileged it must be a fair and accurate report of what took place in court, but it is not necessary that it should be a verbatim report, an abridged or condensed report of the proceedings will be privileged provided it gives a correct and just impression of what took place in court.

By Section 4 of the Libel Act, 1888, a fair and accurate report published in a newspaper of the proceedings of a public meeting or (except where neither the public nor any newspaper reporter is admitted) of any meeting of a Board or Local Authority formed or constituted under the provisions of any Act of Parliament or of any Committee appointed by an Act, is privileged unless it is proved that the report was published maliciously.

(iv) *Fair Comment.*—It is a good defence to an action for libel or slander that the words complained of are a fair comment on a matter of public interest. This defence is available to everybody and is not a peculiar privilege of the press.

In order to succeed in a defence of fair comment the words complained of must be shown to be (*a*) comment, (*b*) fair comment, (*c*) comment on some matter of public interest.

(*a*) An allegation of fact is not comment.

(*b*) The following conditions must be satisfied: The comment must be based on facts truly stated; it must not contain imputations of corrupt or dishonourable motives on the person whose conduct or work is criticised, save in so far as such motives are warranted by the facts. It must be an honest expression of the writer's real opinion.

(*c*) The management of public institutions, e.g., hospitals, infirmaries, prisons, workhouses, and all such as depend on the public rates and subscriptions, is a matter of public interest, as also is the administration of local affairs by Local Authorities. It has been held that the administration of the poor law and the conduct of a Medical Officer of a Poor Law Union was a matter of public interest.

CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

The publication of a defamatory libel is a common law misdemeanour. Where criminal proceedings are taken for libel the modern practice is to prosecute by indictment. The first step in the ordinary course of criminal proceedings is to bring the person charged with a crime before Justices of the Peace in order that the charge may be investigated. The Justices may either refuse to issue a summons or, if they decide that a *prima facie* case has been made out, commit the case for trial. Justices will not commit unless there is a good *prima facie* case.

Except in certain special cases, for example, when the words are blasphemous, seditious, or obscene, no criminal proceedings can be taken for defamation by slander, but there may be an indictment if the words tend to a breach of the peace.

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CO-OPERATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES: REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT: VOLUNTARY OR COMPULSORY CO-OPERATION

SUMMER SCHOOL ESSAY COMPETITION

Mr. C. Kent Wright, Town Clerk, Stoke Newington, won the Sir Arthur Robinson prize in this year's Summer School Prize Essay Competition. Entrants were given a choice of two subjects, Mr. Kent Wright electing to write on "The Principles on which, and the Methods by which, Co-operation between Different Local Authorities and Different Classes of Authorities may best be Secured or Developed." The available space permits the reproduction only of Mr. Kent Wright's main points.

A CYNIC once said that the chief principle of English Local Government is its lack of principle. It must be admitted that our system of Local Government has developed on no settled or intelligent design, but that, like Topsy, it "just growed." It has been built up by a "fortuitous concourse of efforts," and in its conglomeration of authorities of all sorts and shapes and sizes resembles nothing so much as a patchwork quilt.

County Government Prior to 1888

Take, for example, the conditions which prevailed with regard to County Government, prior to the Local Government Act of 1888. There were justices, poor law guardians, sanitary authorities, highway boards, school boards, burial boards, overseers, vestries, and a host of statutory authorities all exercising functions within the county. Many of their areas cut across the county boundaries and it seldom happened that the areas of two authorities were coterminous. The franchise, method, date and period of election were different in each case. It was, in short, "a chaos of areas, a chaos of franchise, a chaos of authorities, and a chaos of rates." It can hardly be wondered at that the adjustment between the structure and functions of local authorities often left much to be desired. When we consider the conditions which obtained as recently as in 1880, it is nothing short of a miracle that we have to-day succeeded in substituting comparative order for that chaos.

Divisions of Service

There are two main divisions of local government services: (i) those which are undertaken for the benefit of the community at large, and (ii) those which benefit a particular class or locality. As a general axiom it may be affirmed that the former are suitable and the latter unsuitable for co-ordinated effort.

The legislature has conferred upon local authorities powers of joint action of almost every imaginable kind. In the words of Dr. W. A. Robson:

> Local authorities have been empowered to join together for specified purposes with authorities of the same class, and with those of other classes. They have been given power to set up joint committees for dealing with any purpose in respect of which they are mutually interested (2). They have been authorised to establish temporary

MR. C. KENT WRIGHT,
Town Clerk, Stoke Newington

organisations for short periods or permanent boards with a separate life of their own (3). Some Acts of Parliament permit the constitution of joint bodies with independent financial powers (4), others stipulate that financial power must remain in the constituent authorities (5). A large number of Acts confer executive power on joint boards or committees; in others, the joint functions are to be of an advisory character only (6). In certain cases Parliament has stipulated that the joint body must be composed of members of the constituent authorities, in others an express exemption from this condition has been conferred (7). A whole series of enactments enables local authorities to enter into contractual agreements for joint action (8).

To what extent have local authorities availed themselves of these "potential new forms of municipal tissue"? There are, of course, a large number of joint hospital authorities, joint sanitary authorities, joint water and gas authorities, and joint sewage authorities. The main trend of Local Government organisation to-day appears to be not only the concentration of work in large authorities by eliminating smaller ones, but the setting up by large authorities of new regional bodies to deal with such matters as transport, electricity and town planning.

(2) Local Government Act, 1894, S.57. (3) e.g., Public Health Act, 1875, ss.279 and 285. (4) e.g., Mental Deficiency Act, 1913, S.29. (5) e.g., Public Libraries Acts. (6) e.g., Town Planning Act, 1925, s.2 (1), ii; Electricity (Supply) Acts, 1919 and 1922. (7) e.g., Public Libraries Act, 1892-93. (8) e.g., Children Act, 1908, s.108.

Ordered Planning

Within recent years perhaps the most notable example of the development of voluntary co-operation among local authorities can be found in the sphere of town planning, the necessity for co-operation in respect of which is now fully recognised. It is obviously desirable that there should be a town planning scheme for the whole of an area which forms one economic unit, and equally obvious that the future character of land on one side of the boundary of a town planning area cannot be settled without reference to the future development of land on the other. The desirability of obtaining continuous open zones around densely populated areas as well as ample playing fields near residential districts is self-evident.

Town Planning Bill

The Town and Country Planning Bill now before Parliament contains clauses which, if enacted, will confer powers on two or more town planning authorities or county councils who are desirous of acting jointly in the preparation or adoption of a scheme, to appoint a joint committee for the purpose and will confer on the Minister of Health powers by order to provide for the constitution of such a joint committee if he considers it expedient. Clause 5 of the Bill (as amended by Standing Committee D) contains some useful provisions with regard to the alteration of the constitution of joint committees.

One objection which has been raised to the Town and Country Planning Bill is that many small authorities are quite incompetent to use such large powers as the Bill confers. It cannot be denied that there is considerable truth in this assertion, although almost all the cited cases in support of it have been of work done under the Housing and other Acts, and none were dependent on town planning powers. In practice, however, the danger is remote for the reason that Local Authorities do co-operate in the exercise of their Town Planning powers.

Water Supply

One of the most neglected fields of co-operation among local authorities is that which relates to the supply of water. There is little doubt that the co-ordination of water supplies throughout the country will be one of the next major

CO-OPERATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

(CONTINUED)

problems which will have to be tackled in the local government of the country. Hence the urgent need for the setting up of Water Advisory Committees covering large areas. The functions of the Regional Committees would be to ascertain the needs of each of the separate districts and formulate a definite policy designed to meet their present and prospective requirements. They would consist of representatives of each local authority or water undertaker in the area.

Just as it was found impossible to obtain the concurrence of all electricity authorities under the voluntary arrangements contemplated under the 1919 Act, so, in this connection, a recalcitrant authority could obstruct the implementing of a regional scheme for water supply. An essential principle to the successful carrying out of such a scheme should be that, in default of agreement being arrived at voluntarily between the undertakings concerned, a power to compel them to co-operate should be vested in a central authority.

The first step towards the solution of the problem is the setting up of Water Advisory Committees. The question, however, is more one of supply than of administration, and seems to call for expert treatment rather than for merely regional representation.

River Pollution and Land Drainage

Allied to the question of water supply is the problem of keeping the rivers of the country free from pollution, for in spite of the provisions of the Rivers Pollution Acts, the condition of the rivers in this country has been growing steadily worse. It seems that the only practical solution of this problem is to be found in some form of compulsory co-ordination. Independent action by county councils is of little use.

Until the passing of the Land Drainage Act, 1930, the whole system of the country was falling into a state of chaos, owing to the lack of co-ordination. The Royal Commission on Drainage found that the multiplicity of drainage authorities throughout the country, each independent of the others, were carrying out their work in a state of complete anarchy. The Land Drainage Act, 1930, affords an example of the type of co-ordination which it would be impossible to achieve without compulsory powers. It sets up new authorities having jurisdiction over wide areas, and provides machinery for the care of all watercourses whereby land is drained, and incidentally for the needs of irrigation.

It is in its financial arrangements that the Land Drainage Act is most open to criticism. It makes large towns on the high ground near the source of a river rateable for the drainage of the lands near the mouth, while clearly the increased production value of the reclaimed land is of very slight interest to the people who have contributed most towards its reclamation.

Again, unlike the Electricity Supply Acts and the Road Traffic Act, the Land Drainage Act retains "amateur status" for the members of its Catchment Boards—surely a mistake in dealing with a highly technical problem.

In respect of sewage disposal the same disregard for natural configuration and economic boundaries has characterised the activities of local authorities as in respect of many other services. Yet this is another sphere of local government work in which co-operation is not only desirable, but in many ways easier of accomplishment than in other spheres.

Electricity and Gas

The object underlying co-ordination between Local Authorities in respect of electricity supply (which *mutatis mutandis* can be applied to most public utility services) is to enable electricity to be generated in the most efficient and economical manner possible by the concentration of generation in a relatively small number of large stations most favourably situated for cheap generation and inter-connected one with another. By the complete co-ordination of the working of such stations great technical advantages can be secured which will result in the production of electricity at a cheaper rate than is otherwise possible.

Many Joint Authorities have been formed under the 1919 Act and have been the means of effecting considerable economies.

On the whole, the co-ordination effected by the Central Electricity Board presents one of the most satisfactory forms of municipal co-operation which has been adopted in the country—partly, no doubt, because it is so comprehensive and offers no means of escape to the recalcitrant authority. To secure co-operation between a number of disparate undertakings of widely differing sizes, resources and interest—a compulsory basis will have inevitably to take the place of a voluntary one.

The "gas grid" is another sphere of co-operation which is in its infancy, but which will have to be tackled at some time. At the present time only six Joint Boards have been established by Act of Parliament for carrying on gas undertakings within areas covering the districts of several Local Authorities.

In matters of research and the production and sale of residuals the gas industry is co-ordinated to a marked degree. In this respect it has something to teach its rival—electricity.

Smoke abatement is another instance of a sphere of action which might well be organised on a regional basis.

Education : Police

The Education Act, 1921, provides that it shall be the duty of local education authorities to "make adequate and suitable arrangements for co-operating with local education authorities for higher education in matters of common interest," particularly in respect of the preparation of children for higher education, their transference at suitable ages from elementary schools to more advanced ones, and the supply and training of teachers.

Except, however, in county boroughs, when the council is the sole authority for all grades of education, the establishment in the same area of two types of independent education authorities has proved, in effect, a very serious drawback to efficient administration. There has been a deplorable lack of that co-operation between elementary and high education authorities which was envisaged in the codifying Act of 1921. In several places, however, notably in Lancashire and in the West Riding of Yorkshire, more satisfactory results have been achieved.

A good example of compulsory co-operation may be found in the organisation of the county police forces. These are managed by a Standing Joint Committee, composed as to one half of county councillors and the other half of justices of the peace appointed in Quarter Sessions. In addition, other kinds of joint action may be adopted by the police forces. A Standing Joint Committee in one county may appoint as chief constable a person holding the same office in an adjoining county, subject to the consent of the police authority in the latter area. This arrangement is now in operation in the three Divisions of Lincolnshire and also in Cumberland and Westmorland.

Public Libraries

For a public composed of readers with a variety of wants and a variety of other readers with special wants it is certain that no small library can provide an adequate service. Edinburgh has successfully put into force a scheme for a series of travelling libraries to cope with the needs of the rural area which it incorporated under its Amalgamation Act of 1920. A similar scheme might advantageously be adopted by a large county borough in co-operation with outlying Rural or Urban Districts.

A suggested solution of the problem, at any rate in so far as it affects the urban and rural district councils and non-county borough councils with a population of less than 30,000 which are adjacent to county boroughs, is that the library authority for all these districts should be the county borough which should be responsible for the administration of branch libraries in the districts concerned, the districts to appoint representatives on the Libraries Committee of the County Borough and the County Borough Council authorised to precept upon the districts for whom they provide library services to an extent, say, not exceeding a 3d. rate on the district concerned. Rural districts which are not near a county borough would of necessity continue to be served by the county library service.

Traffic Areas and Commissioners

It was thought at one time that the duty of issuing road service licences would be transferred to a joint authority, upon which would be represented the local authorities within its area—who had administered the provisions of the Town Police Clauses Act, 1847, relating to the licensing of public service vehicles. It soon became apparent, however, that the difficulties of securing adequate representation for the district comprised in the large traffic areas which were contemplated, without creating a joint authority which would be hopelessly unwieldy, were insuperable. Accordingly, by the Road Traffic Act, 1930, the whole of England was divided into eleven traffic areas. For each traffic area a body of three commissioners was established, one to be appointed by the Minister of Transport from a panel nominated by the county councils in the area, one to be appointed by the Minister from a panel nominated by the county borough and urban district councils in the area, and the chairman to be appointed by the Minister. A public service vehicle may not be used as such on any highway unless there has been granted in respect of it a certificate of fitness by a certifying officer appointed by the Minister, and a licence by the appropriate traffic area commissioners.

Co-operation in the Metropolis

The contention is frequently made that the government of metropolitan areas presents special problems demanding special solution. The administrative county is 118 square miles in extent and includes the City of London—the famous "one square mile"—which is completely independent of the London County Council. The Metropolitan Police District includes the whole of the County of Middlesex and part of the counties of Surrey, Essex, Kent and Hertfordshire. The Metropolitan Water Board has another separate area of jurisdiction and the London and Home Counties Joint Electricity Authority has still another. This enumeration of authorities points to the absence, rather than the presence, of co-operation. The existence, however, of 28 metropolitan boroughs of virtually equal status and the distribution of duties between them and the London County Council provide many opportunities for co-operation which are not usually to be found in the provinces. The Metropolitan Boroughs' Standing Joint Committee constitutes an admirable type of machinery for joint negotiation on the part of the Metropolitan Borough Councils with the London County Council on matters in which they have a common interest.

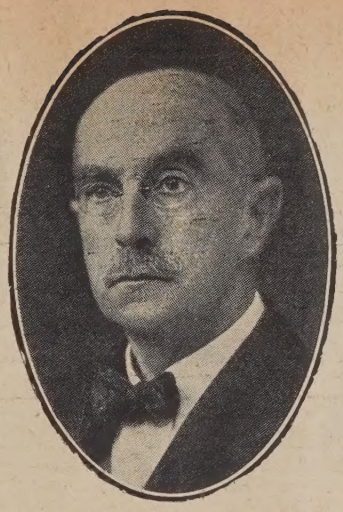
There are, however, many anomalies and considerable overlapping in the apportionment of duties between the London County Council and the metropolitan borough councils—especially in the sphere of the administration of the Public Health Services. This is mainly due to the abandonment of the principle underlying the Public Health (London) Act, 1891, namely, that the functions of the metropolitan borough councils should be executive and those of the London County Council almost completely

supervisory. Examples of such anomalies are to be found in the supervision of nursing homes, common lodging-houses, and boarded-out children which is carried out by the County Council and which lies more within the province of the local councils.

Another method of co-operation which has been adopted in the metropolis is the practice of individual Metropolitan Borough Councils obtaining parliamentary powers through a General Powers Bill which is promoted every year by the London County Council. It is conceivable that a similar arrangement might with advantage be arrived at between district councils and provincial county councils.

Voluntary Organisations

Apart from the combinations of local authorities, which are sanctioned by Statute, an effective means by which co-operation is secured between local authorities and a large number of voluntary organisations, whose work might otherwise to a certain extent overlap that of the local authorities, is through the work of the rural community councils and councils of social service. There are now in existence twenty-three rural community councils and sixty town councils of social service. The national headquarters of these bodies is the National Council of Social Service.



SIR ARTHUR ROBINSON, G.C.B., C.B.E.
(Secretary, Ministry of Health)

PRINCIPLES OF CO-OPERATION

Functions and Areas

From the foregoing summary of some of the principal methods of co-operation now in force it is evident that almost endless " combinations and permutations " of co-operation are possible to local authorities. Suppose there are four adjacent local authoritities : A, County Borough; B, Non-county Borough; C, Urban District Council; D, Rural District Council.

A and B may have an agreement for the through running of tramcars and omnibuses. B, C and D may be constituent bodies of a joint hospital board. B and C may have a joint drainage scheme. A, B and C and D may be members of a Regional Town Planning Committee. And so on. When the framework of Local Government, which at long last has been given a semblance of tidiness, can be criss-crossed about in this way, there is clearly a danger of lapsing again into untidiness and undue complexity.

But what is the alternative? The only alternative appears to be the increase of special areas for particular services. The number of these special areas cannot, however, be indefinitely increased. Such areas, if they are established, would have to be co-ordinated.

By the wise and judicious exercise of their existing powers of co-operation, local authorities can achieve areas of sufficient flexibility to meet the requirements of most services. It is true that those areas may not be so ideal as areas which could be scientifically devised if the whole of the existing framework of Local Government were ignored. It is apprehended that the advantages of being able to work through the cohesive units of this existing structure and of being able to correlate the needs and the financial resources of a regional district are to be preferred to having a perfect area without such advantages. It is essential, however, if any service is to be efficiently administered by means of a Joint Authority, that power should be vested in a government department to compel a particular district to take part in a joint scheme. Otherwise the progress of Local Government in this country will be co-extensive with the progress of the most backward and obtuse authorities.

Complexity is inseparable from the existing system. The combination of authorities in fresh groups for the administration of particular services does undoubtedly militate against the ideal of the self-contained area which is completely "master in its own house."

It is clear that the ideal of the water-tight compartment in Local Government—the authority which can keep the administration of *all* services within its area—cannot be sustained. Equally, it seems clear that by using their existing powers of co-operation local authorities can adapt themselves to modern requirements without the necessity of any radical alteration in the Local Government structure. Many combined areas are, or can be made, structurally superior to the units of which they are composed, and the individual units do constitute a kind of " catchbox " for all authorities for the purposes of representation and of rating.

Co-operation or Extensions

Another aspect of co-operation which should be mentioned is the possibility of avoiding the internecine feuds between county borough councils and county councils by means of a greater use by local authorities of their powers of co-operation. Every time that a county borough, avid for greater prestige, a large area, and an enhanced rateable value, seeks an extension of its borough boundaries, we have the somewhat undignified spectacle of the opposing county council, whose area would be infringed by the proposed extension, trying to prove that the administration of the county borough is bad and that its financial commitments are of such a serious nature as to render it entirely inequitable that these should be shared with the added areas.

On the other hand, it is assumed by the county boroughs that, once the need for co-operation is admitted, a case of borough extensions has been made out. The usual contentions put forward by county boroughs desirous of extending their boundaries are that it is only by the extension of competent urban areas so as to form one large unit for urban self-government that the present-day requirements in matters of Public Health, sanitation, sewerage, transport, public utility services, higher and elementary education and the like can adequately be met.

One of the chief arguments in favour of the principle of co-operation rather than the merger of small local authorities into a larger one is that, by co-operation, the identity, the civic consciousness and the organised local life of the smaller authority can still be preserved without detracting from the variety and the efficiency of the services which it enjoys.

It is suggested that it would be to the advantage of the Local Government of this country as a whole if this continual feeling of uncertainty and assistance could be removed, even, say, for a limited period of five years or ten years. No doubt the review of districts under Section 46 of the Local Government Act, 1929, will help towards this end.

Financial Arrangements

Examples have been given of a variety of methods of co-operation between local authorities, and it follows as a matter of course that the financial arrangements connected with such co-operation are equally various and sometimes more complicated. Instances of agreements in which the financial provisions are frequently the most difficult to draft are agreements with regard to the position of hospitals, "through running" agreements, sewerage agreements, construction of arterial roads, town planning schemes, and standardisation of frequency.

Summary of Principles

It is, of course, axiomatic that the chief end of any system of administration is to provide the services which the inhabitants of a given area need. In dealing with the principles of co-operation the primary consideration must be whether those services can be provided more efficiently and more economically under the joint administration of two or more authorities than under the individual administration of a single authority.

The principal difficulties in the way of achieving co-operation which is satisfactory both from the point of view of the service to be administered and the authorities who co-operate are :—

(*a*) to determine, by technical considerations, the functions in respect of which co-operation should take place;

(*b*) to determine the area over which co-operation shall extend;

(*c*) to secure that each constituent authority concerned has adequate representation on the joint authority; and

(*d*) to adjust the financial contributions of each authority upon a fair and equitable basis.

How are these difficulties to be met? In the first place, it must be recognised that for certain functions such as Town Planning, and Water Supply, it is essential that local authorities should co-operate.

There are other functions, e.g., sewerage, in which co-operation is not essential, but which, having regard to special local circumstances, may lend themselves admirably to administration by a joint authority. In such cases we may accept the principle that those authorities should co-operate who are unable, either by reason of their financial resources or their physical configuration, to administer such functions individually so efficiently and economically as they could by joint action.

It must be recognised, however, that the more extensively joint arrangements are made in the form of either joint committees or joint boards, the more restricted is the sphere in which local authorities transact their business in the normal manner that is, as directly elected authorities capable of discharging their functions without resort to joint action. Due consideration should therefore be given to the problem of whether the advantages in greater efficiency and economy, which result from administration under a joint scheme, outweigh the disadvantages of administration through an indirectly elected authority.

" Local Government," it has been said, " must be above all *local*, and distributed administration is so valuable a system in its effect upon the inhabitants that it may be worthwhile to pay for it by sacrificing some of the initial economy and efficiency which might be gained under another system."

It must further be postulated that where two or more authorities have agreed that a joint scheme is desirable, and the success of that scheme may be seriously impaired or endangered by another authority's refusing to participate in it, legal powers of compelling it to do so should be vested in a Central Department provided that it is satisfied that the participation of the recalcitrant is necessary to ensure the success of the scheme. Such powers

would be similar to the Default Powers which Parliament has already entrusted to county councils.

It is anticipated that the review of county districts and the orders made by the Minister after considering them will result in a far more satisfactory delimitation of areas than has ever obtained before. In the past Parliament never appears to have seriously addressed its mind to a detailed consideration of the functions to be discharged by different classes of local authorities and their capacity to discharge such functions.

The new areas should approach more closely than ever before the ideal of being both willing and able to discharge the functions assigned to them by Parliament.

Joint schemes will still be necessary and desirable for certain services. In determining the area of such joint schemes it is clearly desirable that the boundaries of the joint scheme should not intersect the areas of the newly-formed districts. Moreover, where a joint area is constituted it should, if possible, be used for two or more purposes of co-operation, in the same manner as most county councils have utilised the same divisions of their counties for assessment areas and for public assistance areas.

Where a federal body is constituted it is desirable that special provisions should be made to limit its expenditure and the consequent liability of its constituent authorities. Otherwise the limits on borrowing powers to two years assessable value imposed by the Public Health Act, 1875, disappear, and the new joint authority can start afresh " with a clean sheet." Moreover its representatives are usually indirectly elected and therefore not in such close contact with the ratepayers as are the councillors of an individual authority. This is an additional reason for the imposition of some safeguard against excessive expenditure.

Systematic Organisation

As regards representation, the aim of every joint authority should be to secure the greater efficiency without undermining local responsibility. This is, of course, an ideal which can never be completely attained.

As was stated in the report of the Royal Sanitary Commission, 1869-71, " It would constitute perfection to combine with the economy and efficiency of systematic organisation the energy and interest of distributed administration."

In general, however, it may be said that a joint committee or board should be definitely limited as regards numbers and should not be too unwieldy; that the representation of the different local authorities concerned should be as far as possible proportionate to their respective interests in the subject matter of the joint scheme; that provision should be made in all joint schemes and agreements for arbitration in the event of disagreement between the representatives on joint authorities; and that, whenever practicable, the representation accorded to the smallest authorities should err on the side of generosity, in order to obviate, as far as possible, that " inferiority complex " from which so many of them suffer.

Financial Contributions

The fundamental principle as regards the financial contribution of local authorities concerned in a joint scheme whether they are made by way of precept or otherwise, is that they should be assessed according to the degree of benefit received. This must be modified in some cases by the ability to pay of the various constituent authorities.

Where the benefits derived from a joint scheme are more or less equally divided between the local authorities concerned, their respective rateable values obviously form the most satisfactory basis upon which their financial contributions are to be assessed. Where such benefits are not equally divided, the financial arrangements must be varied accordingly.

Let me illustrate. Authorities A, B and C agree to co-operate in a joint sewerage scheme which will affect the whole of their respective areas. Their financial contributions can be based on their respective rateable values.

Authorities X, Y and Z agree to co-operate in a similar scheme which will effect the whole of the areas of X and Y, but only a small fraction of the area of Z. A satisfactory way of apportioning the financial contributions in such a case is for Z to contribute an agreed lump sum payment, and for X and Y to make contributions based on their respective rateable values.

It is, of course, easy to enunciate general principles, but it is difficult to find practical means of carrying them into effect, as is evidenced by the variety and complexity of the financial provisions in agreements between local authorities with regard to the joint administration of different functions.

In general, we may affirm that most of the

READERS ARE INVITED TO USE THE CORRESPONDENCE COLUMNS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE

circumstances which have to be considered in connection with the re-organisation of areas under Section 46 of the Local Government Act, 1929, must be considered also when the desirability or otherwise of co-operation has to be determined. These are :—

(*a*) Area;
(*b*) Population;
(*c*) Financial resources;
(*d*) Convenience or otherwise of present boundaries;
(*e*) Public services, in particular, water supply, sewerage and sewerage disposal;
(*f*) Local history and sentiment;
(*g*) Record of district council as administrators;
(*h*) General competency to discharge functions;
(*i*) Probable effect of co-operation upon financial resources.

The governing consideration will be to secure the welfare of the population affected and the best and most efficient method.

The Machinery of Co-operation

In the concluding portion of this essay an attempt will be made to refer to some methods of co-operation, other than those which have been dealt with previously, whereby local authorities can either promote uniformity of procedure in their work and organisation or afford each other mutual help by the exchange or dissemination of ideas relating to public administration.

(*To be continued*)

EMPRESS OF BRITAIN

In November next the *Empress of Britain*, the world's wonder-ship—the largest built in Britain since the war and the largest vessel ever to encircle the globe—will leave Southampton on a Grand Cruise round the world. The wonders of the *Empress of Britain* and the places of historic interest and scenic beauty to be encountered on the cruise are described in a beautifully illustrated brochure a copy of which may be obtained on application to the Cruise Department, Canadian Pacific, 72 Charing Cross, London, S.W.1.

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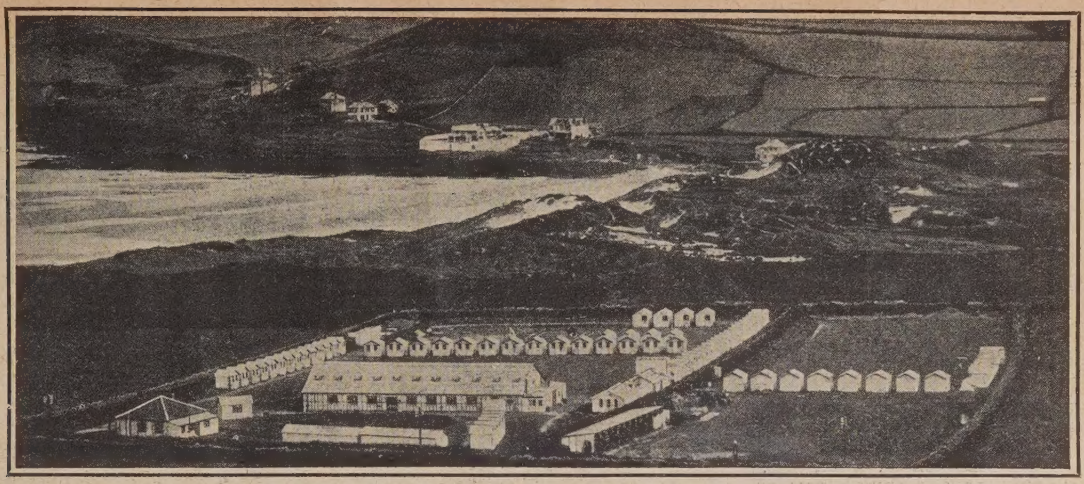

THE LURE OF CROYDE BAY

By F. W. FOULGER

Honorary Secretary, Greenwich Branch of N.A.L.G.O.

I WAS greatly impressed while at Croyde Bay Camp this year to meet quite a number of campers who had been there during my 1931 visit, and to hear of others who had already been, or were hoping to arrive later in the season.

Although a particular holiday centre may be generally worthy of patronage, one does not necessarily desire to visit it two years in succession. After all, there are many other charming resorts, and the holiday allowance even of local government officers is usually limited. Again and again I have asked myself the question: " To what can be ascribed the special appeal which Croyde Bay Camp makes to N.A.L.G.O. members? "

Holiday Delights

To begin with, Croyde Bay itself, quite apart from the camp, is a charming little part of Devonshire; there are stretches of perfect sand, bathing is ideal, surf-riding is deservedly popular, whilst within easy walking distance is Baggy Point, with its imposing rocks, smugglers' caves, and a wealth of luxurious vegetation growing on the hills behind, from which one gets magnificent views of delightful Devonshire scenery. Ilfracombe, Braunton, Barnstaple, and other centres of interest are but a few miles away.

The neighbourhood alone, however delightful, cannot but account in part for the lure of Croyde.

Does the attraction lie wholly in the Camp itself? To detail fully the activities of a single week—I had almost said of a single day—would be to occupy a great amount of space.

The Camp—it is not really a camp, of course, one would rather refer to it as a community—is a collection of over 200 cheery souls of all ages, and incidentally of all municipal grades. All are imbued with the ebullience of youth, dignity is forgotten (even a Town Clerk would find dignity difficult in shorts), misunderstandings are non-existent, everyone putting all they can into the life of the community, and certainly getting all they can out of it. The inevitable result is that every gesture is an enthusiasm; sports are a glorious mixture of effort and humour; musical programmes, often produced on the shortest possible notice, reach a high standard of excellence; fancy dress parades, whether for kiddies or adults, displaying praiseworthy ingenuity and occasionally, audacity.

Dancing is as dancing ought to be, namely an expression of sheer buoyant spirit, whilst in a somewhat quieter atmosphere there are rambles, organised and unorganised, to places of interest—Clovelly, Doone Valley, Barnstaple, Lundy Island, Lynton, and Lynmouth. Then the weekly trip to the concert party entertainment at Ilfracombe, where a substantial part of the programme is usually provided by the Croyde Bay contingent, much to the amusement and sometimes to the surprise of the conventional holiday maker in the audience.

ARE YOU INTERESTED?

to know there are a few vacancies at

CROYDE BAY HOLIDAY CAMP

from 17th September.

If So, Send your application NOW!

But the problem does not appear to be fully solved yet.

The dual appeal of the neighbourhood of Croyde and the comprehensive life at the Camp do not entirely explain, in my opinion, the lure of Croyde.

Thrill of Possession

Perhaps I shall be regarded as a sentimentalist, but I am going to risk making the confession that each time I read the notice board at the entrance, indicating that the Camp belonged to the National Association of Local Government Officers, I experienced a thrill of possession. I was a N.A.L.G.O. member; in part—an infinitesimal part, of course—it was my camp, established in my recreative and social interests.

This was the deciding factor locating the lure of Croyde and, frankly, so far from having seen as much as I want to of Croyde Bay, I am hoping that it will be possible to spend at least a week or two each year there, unless, of course, N.A.L.G.O. in its wisdom acquires other camps to share my interest.

Friends at Headquarters tell me that about one half of those who stayed at Croyde Bay in 1931 applied for admission again in 1932. It is little wonder that with accommodation for about 200 only, many applications had to be refused.

To the young officer I would suggest that Croyde Bay has all the possibilities of a perfect holiday. To the officer getting on in years, I cannot think of any holiday atmosphere better calculated to enable him to renew his youth.

The National Executive Council at the 1931 Conference at Edinburgh were criticised for purchasing Croyde Bay Camp. It was tactfully pointed out, however, that one of the objects of N.A.L.G.O. was to promote the social and recreative life of the members, and the success of the Camp during the past two seasons has abundantly justified the enterprise.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

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24 ABINGDON STREET,
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ALL HEADQUARTERS COMMUNICATIONS should be addressed to the General Secretary and endorsed with the appropriate subject, e.g., "Legal," "Insurance," "Finance," "Organisation," "Education," or "Special Activities."
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Metropolitan and Eastern Districts—H. Slater, 24 Abingdon Street, Westminster, S.W.1. Telephone: Victoria 8592.

London County Council Branch—T. M. Kershaw, 24 Abingdon Street, Westminster, S.W.1. Telephone: Victoria 8592.

North Western and North Wales District—Haden Corser, 22 Booth Street, Manchester. Telephone: Central 5257.

North Eastern and Yorkshire Districts—J. B. Swinden, 2, Basinghall Square, Leeds. Telephone: Leeds 24861.

East Midlands, West Midlands and South Wales Districts—J. E. N. Davis, York House, Great Charles Street, Birmingham. Telephone: Central 1836.

South-Eastern, Southern and South-Western Districts—F. Thomas, Room 60, Somerset House, Reading. Telephone: Reading 480.

Scottish—J. M. Mortimer, 135 Wellington Street, Glasgow. Telephone: Douglas 404.

STAFF INCOME TAX

The Inland Revenue Authorities expressed to the Middlesex County Council a wish that the scheme adopted in December, 1931, for the payment of income tax by the County Council on behalf of permanent staff should be made permanent. The Council has approved the suggestion and will continue direct payments to the Inland Revenue Authorities.

HEADQUARTERS AND BRANCHES

The following Circulars have been remitted to branch honorary secretaries from Headquarters.

JULY 25

Circular No. 53/NPS/1932

Announcing a membership campaign and competition amongst Local Correspondents and enclosing details of the competition.

JULY 29

Circular No. 54/Gen/1932

Enclosing for information copy of questionnaire which had been forwarded to the Clerks of Local Authorities with a view to bringing up to date the Association's records on salary deductions.

AUGUST 11

Circular No. 55/BS/1932

Forwarding a supply of the prospectus and application form for membership of the N.A.L.G.O. Building Society; giving general information, and asking for the appointment of a Local Correspondent for this section.

Circular No. 56/BO/1932

Giving details of the "Help Yourself" annual scheme and asking the branches to give their best support.

MR. ERNEST E. HOLT
(A Member of the Halifax Branch)
Composer of the N.A.L.G.O. Camp Song

HOME PROTECTION

There is no better way of protecting a house and its contents against the everyday risks of fire, burglary, etc., than by taking out a Comprehensive Policy with N.A.L.G.O. The rates are 1s. 3d. per £100 for the house and 4s. 3d. per £100 for the contents and show a very substantial saving on the rates quoted by other companies.

Hundreds of members have taken out these policies and those whose insurances become renewable on September 29 are strongly advised to transfer to N.A.L.G.O. Cover will be given immediately the application form is received.

HELP YOURSELF ANNUALS

The "Help Yourself" Society has again decided to publish its Annual this year. It is an exceedingly attractive publication and well worth 2s. 6d. The proceeds of the sale are distributed amongst hospitals and charities in proportion to the number of Annuals they sell. The N.A.L.G.O. B. & O. Fund has been included in the scheme for several years past, and last year it benefited to the extent of nearly £3,000 as a result of selling 40,420 copies.

BRANCH JOURNALS

A request that the branches should send a copy of their local journals has brought to light several publications not hitherto included in the list at Headquarters. No doubt the following list of branch publications will be of interest: Accrington, *The Accrington and District Nalgo News*; Acton, *Monthly Notes*; Batley, *The Officers' Mess*; Bath, *The Municipalist*; Bedford, *The Bulletin*; Blackburn, *At Your Service*; *Chesterfield, *The Journal*; *Coventry, *Camera Principis*; *Croydon, *Croydon Municipal Officers' Journal*; *Devon C.C., *At Your Service*; Gloucester, *Civitas*; Greenwich, *N.A.L.G.O. Notes*; Hants C.C., *Local Leaflet*; *Isle of Thanet, *The Thanet Officer*; *Leeds, *The Guildman*; Lindsey County Officers, *The Newlander*; *L.C.C., *L.C.C. Branch Notes*; *Liverpool, *The Journal*; *Manchester, *Guild Journal*; St. Helens, *The Stimulus*; *Salford, *The Journal*; *Sheffield, *Sheffield Municipal Officers' Guild Journal*; *South Shields, *The Journal*; Southampton, *Branch Notes*; Southwark, *Nalgo Bulletin*; Stalybridge, *The Es-bo Bulletin*; Stockport, *The Optimist*; Twickenham, *Eel Pie*; Wallasey, *The Wheel*; Wednesbury, *Journal Supplement*; *West Riding, *The Luminary*; Widnes, *The Stem*; Worcester (City Treasurer's Dept.), *The Treasury*.

*These publications appear in printed form.

COST OF LIVING

Below we give the average monthly percentage increase over the level of July, 1914, in the Cost of Living Index for the past six months: March, 46; April, 44; May, 43; June, 42; July, 43; August, 41. The percentage increases in each of the five groups on which the Index Figure is based are as follows:—

	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
Food	23	25	23
Rent	54	54	54
Clothing ..	90	90	90
Fuel and Light ..	70	70	70
Other Items ..	75	75	75

The reduction of retail prices in the food group was due to heavy reductions in the prices of potatoes, which were to some extent offset by advances in the prices of eggs and butter.

MOTOR INSURANCE

Members of N.A.L.G.O. are asked to note particularly that applications to the official Insurance Brokers, Messrs. Norman Frizzell and Partners, Ltd., Farleigh House, 97–99 Cheapside, London, E.C.2, for motor or motor-cycle insurance policies under the special N.A.L.G.O. Scheme, or for the renewal of existing policies, should be accompanied by evidence of membership of N.A.L.G.O. on the part of the applicant.

Such evidence should take the form either of the current subscription Receipt, in the case of those who pay their subscriptions annually, or in the case of monthly subscribers, the Membership Card, showing subscriptions paid up to the end of the month, prior to that in which the application is made.

BALTIC CRUISES

A special discount of 5 per cent. is made *on bookings received through Headquarters* for the cruises via Kiel Canal of the United Baltic Corporation.

Bookings can still be accepted for the following dates:

Cruise "A," 11 days, Cabin class £12 (2 berth cabins), September 15.

Cruise "B," 12 days, 1st class, £13, September 23: 2nd class, £10 10s., September 9 and 23.

Departures are from Hay's Wharf, London, and calls are made at Danzig and Gdynia (cruise "A") and at Riga and Tallinn (cruise "B").

SPECIAL CRUISE

A special cruise of 17 days has been arranged, leaving London on Friday, October 7, with calls at Tallinn (4 days) and Riga (4 days). Fares, 1st class £17, 2nd class £14.

Local Government Service

Editorial and Advertisement Offices, 3 and 4 Clement's Inn, Strand, London, W.C.2.

Telephone: Holborn 2288-2289.

Contributions on topical Local Government problems are invited, and will receive careful consideration, but the Editor cannot accept responsibility for the safety of manuscripts submitted for his consideration

Authoritative local news on matters having more than a purely local interest is welcomed.

Legal and other inquiries relating to Local Government will be answered promptly.

All communications should be addressed to The Editor.

SEPTEMBER 1932

NOTES OF THE MONTH

OUR IMMEDIATE TASK

TOWARDS the end of July the National Executive Council issued to all branches a comprehensive statement dealing with the present situation as it affects Local Government Officers, and explaining its attitude towards the various problems raised at the last Annual Conference. This timely and statesmanlike announcement has given a wide measure of satisfaction and abundant confidence to the branches. It is generally admitted that whilst there is a certain amount of nervousness as to what the future holds for public officers, no one is able to forecast what will happen. We know what many people would like to do with public officers and the public services, but, fortunately for everybody concerned, the functions of local government have too permanent a foundation to be seriously disturbed by the ideas of those people who do not understand its real importance. There is no doubt that much of the adverse criticism of local government comes from uninformed sources. In fact, some of it is so illogical as to be almost impossible to answer, and the only hope lies in cultivating a better public appreciation of the national value of local government administration. That is a long row to hoe but it will produce the most fertile results.

Probably the biggest work N.A.L.G.O. has ever undertaken lies in this direction, and there are tremendous possibilities for improving the status of local government service within the range of an information bureau and publicity campaign such as have been visualised in the admirable article written by Professor Laski for this issue.

The National Executive Council, at its meeting held during July, appointed a Special Emergency Sub-Committee and gave it full power to act in the present crisis, and to put into operation the publicity work which was considered at the same meeting.

The Emergency Sub-Committee has already met and brought together two or three of London's greatest experts, and it is hoped that before the end of the present month the ideas that have already been discussed will have been crystallised into a definite piece of machinery. It is possible that this organisation, which will primarily have a national objective, will be so constructed as to be easily diverted to concentrate on a given spot or town should circumstances demand it.

ENLIGHTENING THE PUBLIC

Public administration has a definite national value, but as every student knows, it embraces principles which are contrary to the private interests of those who set the pace for economy stunts. That is fundamental, and we cannot enter into the controversy, because anyone who attempts to defend public administration is immediately suspected of having a political bias of a low-down and foreign character, whereas to be in the opposite camp is an outward sign of respectability and sanctimonious superiority. Those who are the enemies of local government are far less numerous than their noise indicates, and there is undoubtedly a vast body of public opinion lying dormant because it has not been anybody's job to give it a stimulus in the right direction.

The local government and public services of this country are a heritage, and those who benefit by them are the great majority of the public. But do citizens realise what local government means to their comfort and welfare? Does the average ratepayer know what he gets for his money? Has he tried to reckon what the same services would cost him if he had to buy them from private enterprise? Does he realise what a local government officer has to study to be able to do his job properly? Generally speaking, he does not, and that is the reason why the critics get so much of their own way. The sooner he does know the real answer to those questions the better the relationship will be between the public and the public officer.

This new work comes at a time when the branches will be in almost constant session, and it is to be hoped that they will be able to co-operate with Headquarters in defending the prestige of local government administration.

We are now passing rapidly through a period annually set aside for rest and change of environment, and before many weeks are over, we shall have crowded upon us hundreds of annual meetings and social functions. These gatherings provide the best opportunity to drive home the importance of the Association's work and the need for greater vigilance and unity amongst all members, in view of the doubts as to what the future may have in store. We believe the opinion is becoming general that local government officers have, during the past year, made fair sacrifices in salaries, in the interests of the Nation. This view was very plainly stated in *The Times* of August 19, in an article on "The Burden of Rates." Although the author was not satisfied that effective economies in local government had yet taken place, he did say:

"As regards the salaried staff, the question whether they too ought to be asked to accept a permanent reduction in their rate of remuneration is one which requires very careful consideration, especially as regards those in the more highly paid and responsible positions. In the majority of cases in England and Wales, these officials have consented voluntarily to a reduction of their salaries varying from 5 per cent. up to 12½ per cent. for the current year, and it is questionable whether it would be wise to make these reductions permanent, in view of the additional work which is now being thrust upon local authorities by the Central Government. The duties and responsibilities of these higher-placed officers are very important and arduous, and it is certainly desirable to attract and retain men of first-rate ability in these branches of municipal service."

It is senseless to expect the National Executive Council to attack an emergency before it arises. The test of efficiency is in being able to meet an emergency when it does arise. There never was a time when cool judgment was so essential as it is to-day, and when a false move could have more disastrous consequences.

POST OFFICE PERSONNEL

The report of the Bridgeman Committee which was appointed "to enquire and report as to whether any changes in the constitution, status or system of organisation of the Post Office would be in the public interest" was published on the eve of going to press with this issue, and it is very comforting to know that there is no doubt upon the standard of efficiency amongst the staff personnel. The report, in dealing with the criticisms sometimes levelled at the staff, says:—

"In so far as concerns the general attitude of those sections of the Post Office staff who come into contact with the public we believe that the charges of positive discourtesy made against the Post Office Staff are exaggerated.

"Instances do, and must almost inevitably, occur in so large a concern, but the fault is not invariably on the side of the staff, nor can this failing be said to be unknown in commercial organisations or in Public Utility undertakings.

Whenever there is an impartial inquiry into any section of the public services of this country, we find that there is never any doubt left in the minds of the investigators as to the efficiency and integrity of the staff. It is usually pointed out in official documents that the remuneration of public servants is not higher than the rate paid for similar work in "outside commercial concerns." In fact, the contrary is sometimes proved.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

With the hope of encouraging a frank interchange of views on subjects bearing on the work of readers and upon questions of national moment, the Editor has allocated this space for letters from the local government officers. Letters, which should be addressed

The Editor,
"Local Government Service"
3 4 Clement's Inn, Strand,
London, W.C.2

must be received on, or before, 15th of the month to ensure publication in the current issue.

The Editor will not hold himself responsible for the views expressed by the writers.

N.A.L.G.O. SUMMER SCHOOL

To the Editor of

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

SIR,—At the recent gathering of N.A.L.G.O. in this College it was a misfortune for me that I was so much away from home and very preoccupied by urgent business, but my experience of N.A.L.G.O. makes me hope that you will all come here again, and I hope I shall be more at leisure.

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully;
G. S. NEWSOME.

The Master's Lodge,
Selwyn College,
Cambridge.

ECONOMY COMPLEX

To the Editor of

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

SIR,—I am indeed grateful to you for the hospitality of your columns to comment upon the letter from Mr. F. A. Bristow which appears in your August issue. I should, I fear, trespass too deeply upon your space were I to attempt to deal with the many points upon which he touches. I can only hope that his letter may tempt some of your subscribers to read my effort in Lloyds Bank Review for July where I made a reasoned, if somewhat lengthy, attempt to lift this economy question from the quagmire of politics into the realm of practical affairs.

I venture upon two observations on Mr. Bristow's letter.

First, he gives us, no doubt quite unwittingly, a glimpse at his political opinions. "The catastrophe into which uncontrolled private enterprise and the desire for personal gain has [*sic*] plunged the world"; and "the profits of private enterprise must increase the cost" are sufficient to indicate that Mr. Bristow and I are poles asunder in our understanding of political economy.

Secondly, he leaves your readers in complete ignorance of the main argument in the article to which he refers. I gave him a very elementary mathematical proposition.

Total National Income	2,500	millions
Wages fund ..	1,000	"
Essential savings ..	500	"
Public expenditure	1,000	"
Total ..	2,500	"

If these figures are no more than remotely connected with the truth, they show beyond a shadow of a doubt that the nation is living on its capital.

I hope Mr. Bristow will agree, as I am sure most of your readers must, that the process of living on capital is ephemeral in its character. In these circumstances Mr. Bristow would surely be better occupied in enlightening your readers on the sources from which he proposes they should, in the near future, draw their salaries.

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully,
ERNEST W. BENN.

Bouverie House, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4. August 11, 1932.

To Branch Secretaries

Circular letter issued by the Oldham Branch on August 10

Mr. H. N. Smawfield, hon. secretary of the Oldham Branch, desires it to be made known that application for additional copies of the circular letter issued by the Oldham Branch on August 10 have been so great, that a charge of 0d. has had to be fixed to cover the cost of printing and postages. Will branch secretaries who require additional copies (any number) enclose this amount with all future applications.

DANGER OF FALSE ECONOMY

To the Editor of

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

SIR,—In view of the setting-up by local authorities, at the request of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of a committee to investigate the possibilities of further economy in local government expenditure, may I point out one or two considerations which are imperfectly recognised?

Much of the expenditure for which local authorities are responsible is imposed on them by the central Government. It has been pointed out that since 1889, when county councils were established, 230 Acts of Parliament have been passed which imposed spending on county councils. The same point affects spending by city, borough, and other councils.

The capital indebtedness of local authorities represents in large measure tangible assets, or improvements from which the community obtains direct advantage, and many of the institutions the capital cost of which is included in these figures are returning a bonus to the local authorities responsible for them.

Reduced local expenditure, if that is the way "economy" is to lead us, will, apart from small administrative reductions, have to be exercised at the expense of the so-called "social services." I am an advocate of economy, but I am concerned lest the present clamour for saving should land us in worse difficulties than those we are now facing. A hastily effected reduction in the education services or in the provision of hospital treatment may cost us dearly in the long run.

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully,
A[illegible]

House of Commons, August 20.

BALTIC SEA CRUISE

To the Editor of

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE

SIR,—I should like to express my appreciation of the pleasant trip I experienced on the s.s. *Baltonia* on June 9, which sailed from London to Danzig and Gdynia. The food was excellent, plentiful and well served, and everywhere was scrupulously clean.

When we arrived at Danzig there was a guide to escort us round the city and show us many places of interest.

I should have no hesitation in recommending the trip to any member of the N.A.L.G.O., as I feel sure they would have a most enjoyable holiday at a reasonable cost.

Yours faithfully,
(MRS.) E. GRAVILLE.

91 All Saints Avenue,
Margate.
June 27, 1932.

A NEW B. & O. IDEA

The following communication has been received from the honorary secretary of the Wimbledon Branch:—

"One of our members, who was a delegate to the Conference at Weston-super-Mare, was so impressed with the good work done by the B. & O. Fund that upon his return he determined how best he could assist this deserving Fund. The member, who is a car-owner, appealed to all members of the staff owning cars, to grant the use of them for an evening run in aid of the B. & O.

"The outing took place to Newlands Corner on July 21. Eleven cars left the Town Hall at 5.15 p.m., and shortly after the party arrived at its destination tea was served, following which a visit was paid to the Silent Pool, the party returning to Wimbledon via Shere and Westcott.

"In every way the outing was a complete success, and the thanks of the Branch are tendered to the car-owners. The financial result was £3 12s. 6d., a cheque for this sum I have very much pleasure in enclosing."

There are many ways in which local government officers can assist the B. & O. Fund, but the idea of the Wimbledon member is quite new, and is well worth adoption by other Branches.

NALGO APPROVED SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING DISCUSSES RULES

IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE for July last, there appeared a brief report of the annual general meeting of the NALGO Approved Society, held at Bolton, on June 17. In addition to the business referred to in our report, the question of the appointment of Local Correspondents was considered, and in this respect MR. R. W. RAMSAY moved:

"That it be an instruction from this meeting to the Committee of Management to accede to the request of the National Executive Council of N.A.L.G.O. that the Committee give effect to the following resolution which was approved and adopted by the Council at its meeting on October 17, 1931, viz.: 'That it is considered desirable that all appointments to the various offices of the sub-sections of this Association be made by the branches; that each branch receive, and be held responsible for all fees payable for services rendered; and the payment of remuneration to the persons appointed by the Branch.'"

The motion was carried after a prolonged discussion.

Amendment of Rules

MR. W. J. BLAINEY moved an amendment to Rule 6 "Government." (8) To delete the whole. (9) To delete the whole and to substitute therefor:

"After the date of the adoption of this Rule, no member of the Management Committee shall be appointed on the clerical staff or to any other paid post of the society unless he first resigns his membership of the Committee of Management, and no person holding any such paid post shall be eligible for appointment as a member of the Management Committee unless he first resigns such post."

Also to add the following new Rule:

"Prior to January 1, 1933, and in each subsequent year, each Local Correspondent shall cause to be held a meeting of the insured members in his area at which meeting the following items shall be included in the agenda: (*a*) Appointment of a local Committee of Management; (*b*) appointment of a Local Correspondent."

The existing Rule 6 (8) and (9) reads as follows:

"(8) No officer or member of the Committee of Management shall be entitled to take part in any discussion or to vote on any matter in which he is personally interested otherwise than as a member of the Society.

"(9) After the date of the adoption of these rules no member of the Committee of Management shall be appointed to any paid post, either on the clerical staff of the Society, or as a sick visitor or local representative (other than a local representative responsible to a local Committee of Management or exercising powers and duties of a supervisory nature), unless he first resigns his membership of the Committee of Management, and no person holding any such paid post shall be eligible for appointment as a member of the Committee of Management unless he first resigns such post."

The SECRETARY pointed out that as Rule 6 (8) was one of the model rules drawn up by the Ministry of Health Insurance Department it was very unlikely that the Department would agree to its deletion.

The CHAIRMAN ruled that having regard to the previous resolution of the meeting relating to the appointment of Local Correspondents, it would not be in order to move the last part of the proposed new Rule, namely, "(*b*) Appointment of a Local Correspondent."

With the permission of his seconder, MR. BLAINEY withdrew the whole of his motion.

Committee of Management

MR. G. W. COSTER moved:

"That, having regard to the fact that approximately 25 per cent. of the total membership and 26 per cent. of the invested funds represent the effect of the transfer in 1931 of the National Poor Law Officers' Approved Society's engagements, and that the scheme of Additional Benefits for the transferred members is to continue as a separate scheme until June, 1935, the Committee of Management for the ensuing year shall include representatives of the late National Poor Law Officers' Approved Society in addition to Messrs. Coster and Walters, vice-presidents."

After some discussion MR. COSTER, with the consent of his seconder, withdrew the motion.

N.A.L.G.O. CHESS

Correspondence Chess Competition

Eight teams have entered for the National Competition for the "Pullinger" Correspondence Chess Cup, there being three players in each team. They are Battersea, Bootle, Ipswich, Leeds, L.C.C., Mitcham, Southwark, West Riding.

Competitors will be notified of the result of the draw, the periods allotted for playing off the various stages of the Competition in order that it may be completed in time for the "Pullinger" Cup to be presented at the Annual Conference at Folkestone at Whitsun 1933.

Mr. M. J. Murphy, Town Hall, Bethnal Green, E.2, is the honorary secretary of the Competition.

Metropolitan Chess Section

The Metropolitan District Chess Section opens its season early in September. All Branches have been circularised and entries invited for (*a*) Inter-Borough (*b*) Team Competition, (*c*) Individual Championship Competition, and (*d*) Handicap Competition. The Section are playing in the Civil Service and Municipal Chess League during the coming season, in which matches all members of the Section are eligible to compete. Further entries will be received up to September 6. Particulars from the Honorary Secretary (Mr. M. J. Murphy), Town Hall, Bethnal Green, E.2.

GOLF

Members of the Barrow and District Branch assembled recently for the purpose of handing over the "Johnson" Golf Trophy to Mr. Charles Dunn, Chief Rate Collector, following his success in the recent inter-departmental competition. In the unavoidable absence of the President (Mr. W. A. Chislett, Town Clerk) the presentation was made by Mr. Alan Smith, Assistant Solicitor, who in an appropriate speech, congratulated the winner on his achievement.

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24 Abingdon Street, London, S.W.1

BOOK REVIEWS

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MODERN GOVERNMENT.

By Herman Finer, D.Sc. 2 vols. Methuen & Co. Price 42/- net.

AS the work of Local Government increases in volume and complexity it is becoming more necessary for the Local Government Officer to obtain an adequate conception of the scope and conditions of State activity. There are few books which will help him more to attain this end than this monumental treatise on Modern Government.

In the preface to his work, Dr. Finer explains its scope. "Its foundation," he says, "is the political activity of four democracies, Great Britain, France, Germany and the United States." And again—"The work traces, in a scientific spirit, the generation, development, institutional embodiment and operation of Government, from the first impulses to the final expression and success or failure, through all the unavoidable stages. It treats the material, however, not in the fashion of previous studies, like those of Lowell and Bryce, country by country, but subject by subject—each set of institutions is taken for all countries together. That is, it is truly comparative, and thus affords the basis for sound generalisation."

A more admirable combination of the theoretical and the practical could not be desired. The theorist is apt to be too abstruse and "up in the clouds"; while the purely practical man sometimes goes to the other extreme and cannot see wood for trees. Dr. Finer is equally at home when explaining Machiavelli's conception of the State, or expounding democracy as a doctrine of protest, as he is when he discusses a practical subject such as the working of the administrative machine. "This machine," he says, "consists of the organisation and the men especially engaged in formulating in detail the vague general wishes of the population, in converting the detailed formulae thus established into regulations, and in applying these to affect human behaviour. It must be (1) capable of understanding the general purpose, and zealous to realise it; (2) competent to know when, and where, and how much, its activity is required, and zealous in application; (3) honest; (4) sufficiently numerous."

Of particular interest to those engaged in Local Government are Dr. Finer's remarks on the Civil Service of the four countries with which he deals. He remarks that the present probationary period in our Civil Service is a complete unreality, and considers that some specific form of practical training should follow acceptance in the Service in the higher administrative classes. He suggests that this should be an amalgam of work with Local Government Authorities and foreign travel.

Another chapter which is of vital interest, and which concerns the Local Government Service as much as the Civil Service, is that which deals with the problems arising after recruitment, with its stimulating discussions on the basis of promotion and the rating of efficiency, and its account of the American system of "Efficiency Ratings"—a kind of "clinical thermometer of the Civil Service." As the writer well says, "the problem of classification may thus be defined; to set all servants to work which is not too difficult nor too easy for them to do; and then to treat all who do equal work, equally, and where there is a difference in the amount and quality of the work done, to proportion reward to service."

While it is as a work of reference and a storehouse of facts, enabling us to compare the methods and experience of four different countries, that this book is most valuable, it has succeeded in avoiding the dullness of most books of its compendious character. It is both stimulating and provocative. Hardly a book to pack for one's holiday reading, but decidedly one for the approaching autumn evenings.

C. K. W.

THE NEW MORALITY.

By G. E. Newsom. Ivor Nicholson & Watson, Ltd. Price 6s. net.

THE Rev. G. E. Newsom, M.A., remembered by many as Master of Selwyn College, Cambridge, and Chaplain to His Majesty the King, has written a vigorous reply to the propaganda of Bertrand Russell, Aldous Huxley, and other modernist writers advocating the annihilation of home life and marital loyalty. He would appear to have taken as his text: "There seems to be once more a turning to the old belief that the family holds the secret of social life." Throughout his book he consistently outlines this belief in juxtaposition to the theories and arguments blatantly proclaimed by the campaigners who would destroy it.

There are still many who are ignorant of the quality of the attacks which are being made and of the ethics of the New Morality which is aimed at the disintegration of the home and with it the hitherto universal conception of morality in family life as the majority conceive it. Mr. Newsom has drawn freely on the works of its principal disciples and annotated his remarks fully.

The basic thought of the New Morality is not new. Thomas Hobbes, nearly three hundred years ago, propounded the mechanistic psychology which is still in vogue to-day. To him there was no room in the mind of man for moral impulses of love and trust or for any elements that could join with others to knit the social bond. There is to-day, according to Mr. Newsom, the same disinclination to see in the soul of man any natural capacity for moral and social purpose.

Mr. Newsom considers that the New Morality is based on a low view of the resources of human nature, fitting the loose and unstable individualism of the over-urbanised herd, but no other strata of society. He looks for its rejection to the practical work of men and women who are engaged in the development of social life, and by whom the forces of "science and civilisation" are regarded, not as enemies of good life, but as aids to its development. The garden city movement and its healthy development of life combined with the advantages of modern civilisation receive his suffrage. Good neighbourhood, home-building, and the family spirit flourish in these happy, fertile places.

Mr. Newsom's book is written in simple, straightforward language. It is not above the understanding of people of average intelligence, as are luckily the outpourings of the advocates of the New Morality. It will open the eyes of those who are as yet blind to the evil terror that would accrue should the campaign organised against the Family ever gain the ascendency.

BOOTS BOOKLOVERS LIBRARY

August marked the commencement of a new subscription year in connection with the library service arranged with Messrs. Boots Booklovers Library on special terms for N.A.L.G.O. members.

All members desirous of renewing their subscriptions should obtain a renewal application form from the branch secretary. This form is only issued to bona fide members of N.A.L.G.O. and is endorsed accordingly. The forms should be filled in and accompanied by remittance, handed to the Librarian of the local or most convenient branch of Messrs. Boots Booklovers Library.

To members who have not yet availed themselves of the special terms with Messrs. Boots the following examples may be of interest.

Class "A" entitles the token-holder to all works in circulation including the newly published works, for a period of twelve months, 15s. per volume.

Class "B" entitles the token-holder to all works in circulation, excluding the newly published works (usually volumes are placed in this class about four to eight months after publication), for a period of twelve months, 5s. per volume.

Subscriptions are limited to *two* volumes per member.

Any new member desirous of taking advantage of this scheme should apply for an application form to his branch secretary.

In order to meet the convenience of those members who do not desire immediately to take up this scheme, application forms will be supplied at any date, but the remittance should accompany the form when handed to the Librarian of the branch, as stated above, assessed at the rate of:—

In the case of class "A" 1s. 3d. per month or part thereof; and

In the case of class "B" 5d. per month or part thereof; to expire on August 1, 1933.

Branch secretaries should write to N.A.L.G.O. Headquarters for supplies of the application form, stating the number required. These forms can be used for new subscribers as well as for renewals and by *all* N.A.L.G.O. members.

READERS' NOTES

By JONAS PRAPS

A READER rather takes exception to my pseudonym because it has been used by Arnold Bennett. It is, of course, open to argument whether Bennett had any more right to use it than anyone else. Tonson is dead and Bennett is dead, but lest there be any suspicion of plagiarism the pseudonym has been changed.

* * *

It was an excellent idea on the part of Sir Charles Petrie to set forth in one volume the rise, decline and fall of *The Jacobite Movement* (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 10s. 6d.). The movement was one long sequence of intrigue; ill-fated efforts largely abortive through the inconstancy of its supposed adherents. The profligate Bolingbroke is an instance. "From the moment that he entered James's service the Jacobite plans became known to the British Government with unfailing regularity." The account is interesting and well told.

* * *

Mr. Morton's *In Search of Wales* (Methuen, 7s. 6d.) is no less interesting than his previous "search" books. Whilst he does not neglect the descriptive side nor the historic interests of the places on tour, his main concern is the people—their lives, habits, occupations, and distinctive traits. The cockle-women, for example; "If you wish to eat cockles the women" (on Swansea market) "dip into the soggy mass a saucer that might have been lost from a doll's tea-set." "These priestesses of the great god Indigestion are cockle-women in the summer and mussel-women in the winter. They come from a heavenly protuberance on the Welsh coast known as the Gower Peninsula and their daily search for cockles is one of the most remarkable sights in Wales."

* * *

Will o' the Weald (Harrap 7s. 6d.) is a romance of Sussex in the thirteenth century. Mr. W. Victor Cook writes intimately of feudal barons, reeves, friars, outlaws, and the like. When longbow and pike were wielded in the cause of the strong and the weak went quickly to the wall: when might was right and the common herd lived but to serve their betters. Will, though the rightful heir to the house of Braose, was an outlaw. He gets into the power of his younger brother, acknowledged as Earl, and his Delilah-like paramour. His death would remove any chance of his usurping the earldom. The lady suggests —"Let his tongue be taken out and his hands cut off. Then he may live or die as he will. You go guiltless of his death, and neither by speech nor written word can he do you a hurt." It is a refreshing change from the modern murder mystery and equally thrilling.

* * *

Publishers are, probably perforce, opportunists—a centenary (of birth or death, it matters not) of some author cannot be passed without a fair flow of literature on the "subject." The anniversary of the birth of *Lewis Caroll* could not be overlooked, and Walter de la Mare's monograph (Faber 3s. 6d.) is interesting. Of course with de la Mare, Wolfe, and a few others you do not get very much for your money, not in bulk, but I am in agreement with Belloc in discussing "Writing as a trade," when he descries payment by length: "There is no sort of connection between volume and excellence in this particular activity." It is, he argues, as senseless as judging "the value of a picture by its acreage." De la Mare's book is a delightful review of an ever-green writer.

* * *

One can more easily envy than emulate Mr. Harry Pidgeon in his four years' cruise in *The Islander*, entirely alone in a thirty-four foot yawl, as set forth in *Around the world Single-handed* (Appleton, 12s. 6d.). His route was from Los Angeles across the Pacific Ocean calling at the Marquesas and other South Sea Islands, across the Indian Ocean to South Africa and home by the Atlantic Ocean and the Panama Canal: no mean trip in a small sailing-vessel. Mr. Pidgeon studied navigation and boat-building in a public library, and is known in Los Angeles as "the library-navigator."

* * *

Great Golfers in the Making, by H. B. Martin (Bodley Head, 7s. 6d.) is full of good advice on grip, stance, balance, and temperament, under the new conditions of steel shafts and matched sets of irons. The illustrations are unusual, but add to the interest of the book. Golfers will find much good advice, and in putting it to the test play worse than ever—for a time. Great golfers are always in the making.

* * *

T. S. Stribling's *Bright Metal* (Nisbet 7s. 6d.) is a rather lengthy political novel. The setting is a town in Tennessee and the story chiefly concerns the life of a Southerner married to a Northern actress—the clash of temperaments and mode of life mingled with the wife's efforts towards reform, particularly of political dishonesty, are excellently portrayed. There are some particularly harsh sentences such as "the unaccountable prescience of animals," and "he blurred in his toothless tones"; likewise some quite thoughtful ones "I think the most insidious thing in the world is a small success," but if the political picture is true one may be glad not to be a Tennessee voter.

* * *

Rose Henniker Heaton's *Dinner with James* (Elkin Mathews, 6s.) is more nearly holiday reading than anything I have yet named. It largely concerns the chatter of Sir James Montgomerie and Miss Verena Darrington with the latter's brother chiming in on occasion. The two first-named dine together and discuss various topics, including relations. "My father," Sir James said, "was a most remarkable man. He taught his children two things only—one of them was to wind up their watch every night, and the other, never to inquire who paid the rent for Mrs. Rip Van Winkle when Mr. Rip Van Winkle left home." A bright, cheery book, full of good things.

PITMAN'S

WELL-KNOWN TEXT BOOKS & WORKS OF REFERENCE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM and the Irish Free State

By JOHN J. CLARKE, M.A., F.S.S., Barrister-at-Law.

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HOME GARDENING

By WALTER P. WRIGHT

Author of *Everyman's Encyclopaedia of Gardening, Scientific and Practical Gardening, etc.*

THE appearance of the bulb catalogues reveals the pleasant fact that most bulbs are again going to be cheap. It is true Hyacinths are a little dearer, but we will not complain, with plenty of good-sized bulbs of high-class varieties available at threepence each, and "top-size" bulbs at sixpence to eightpence. There are also abundance of May-blooming Tulips at one shilling to half a crown per dozen, according to the varieties. This is encouraging. I suggest making a move with White Roman and prepared Hyacinths forthwith, including, in the latter class, whatever else is omitted, the graceful pink Nimrod and at least one good white, such as Arentine Arendsen or L'Innocence. If these are put into moist fibre soon the Romans will flower by Christmas and the Prepared soon after. For glasses, I can strongly recommend the two whites, Coreggio and La Grandesse, the two pinks Lady Derby and Queen of Pinks, and the two blues Enchantress and Schotel, all of which are absolutely first class. For an early Trumpet Daffodil I would still use the old Golden Spur, although King Alfred is preferable for later flowering, owing to its finer flowers. The Duc van Thols, scarlet, rose, and yellow, still rule among early forcing Tulips. I again urge care in buying and thoroughly moistening the fibre. A mixture of fibre, shell and charcoal is not dear at five shillings per bushel if it weighs—while just damp—25-30 lb. Firm, but not quite hard, setting of the bulbs, please, and a dark cool corner for the first two months.

* * *

I am glad to see that the price of that invaluable modern Lily, Lilium regale, is down to a very reasonable figure, because it is now within the reach of all. With good-sized bulbs available at five shillings per dozen, and " top size " at two to three shillings more, everybody can afford to grow it in a reasonable quantity. Experience proves that provided it is allotted a cool position it is not fastidious about soil, in fact, that it will thrive in any friable fertile garden soil; it does not, however, relish a dry sun-scorched spot, nor does it share with the older favourite Lilium auratum a marked partiality for peat. If planting in autumn I would bury the bulbs 4 inches deep and spread some litter over the clumps for the winter in very exposed places.

* * *

Useful work in propagation can be done in the flower garden early this month. For example, there is still time to strike Aubrietia cuttings, if new basal shoots are taken off and kept close in a frame. The tops can be taken off in spring for a successional batch. Zonal Geraniums may still be struck, as may Pansies and Violas. A little later Pentstemon and shrubby garden Calceolaria cuttings may go in. Catmint (Nepeta Mussinii) will strike from flowerless basal shoots. All these appreciate sifted sandy soil, and with the exception of the Zonals are best in shade till rooted. If the weather keeps dry, lawns may be mown without the box and the cuttings allowed to lie on the grass, but if the weather turns wet and the grass gets thick catch the mowings in the box. Biennials and perennials sown earlier in summer should be hoed in their lines to keep the soil clean and to stimulate growth. Privet and other hedges may be clipped for the last time this year. It may be wise, too, to go over the pillar Roses with the sprayer, in case aphis or mildew is fastening on to the new growth which has been made so abundantly since the heavy July rains. Coming after, and being followed by, hot spells, these soakers stimulated vegetation wonderfully and the Roses will show the effects in next year's flowering if kept free from pests.

* * *

With respect to vegetables, there was a threat of Potato disease following the July rains, but personally I have not suffered, as I reduced the rank foliage induced by the wet weather, thus allowing air to circulate freely between the rows. If not carried to extremes, which I agree might mean want of flavour in the crop, this is a good plan. But all Potatoes in private gardens ought to be ready for lifting by mid-September. They should be spread thinly and left for a few weeks—covered, of course, to keep out light—then such as have disease will show it by degrees, with the result that by November they can be safely stored. Avoid saving seed from any plants having mottled yellowish leaves, for this is the so-called "Mosaic" disease, which is apt to reappear in worse form the following year. Reduce the leaves of Tomatoes to hasten the colour change in late fruit, but gather before it has lost all its yellow hue. There is time to make a late sowing of Turnips, using Chirk Castle if possible. Cabbages for spring may be planted late in the month or early next. If possible, give liquid manure to backward Celery and Leeks. A sprinkling of salt will help the Asparagus bed after it has been weeded.

* * *

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NALGO BUILDING SOCIETY

FRAE SAVIN' COMES HAVIN

ALTHOUGH the NALGO Building Society Prospectus was published during the holiday month of August the response has been most gratifying, the Society's first £1,000 being received in two days. The scheme is creating considerable interest throughout the country and the Organising Staff reports that Branches and members are most interested, especially the younger members, who are keen to commence saving and accumulate their proportion of the purchase price of a house by the time they are ready to make a home of their own. The scheme has obviously "caught on."

The inevitable number of inquiries for further information have been received. Some members are not sure whether, if they invest with the Society, they will have to borrow. There is no need whatever for an investor to purchase a house.

A point raised by several members is whether the Society will pay interest on uncompleted shares. The answer is that 4 per cent. will be given on each completed £1 of capital, whether it is invested in paid-up shares or partly paid shares. This offers an exceedingly good inducement to the small investor who can obtain a high rate of interest on his small monthly savings.

The Society does not propose to issue half-yearly dividend warrants on paid-up shares. The prospectus states that interest will be added to the investor's account. The reason for this is that the average investor does not desire to withdraw his interest every six months. Therefore, members can be assured that 4 per cent. is being credited to their shares and added to their accounts, but can be withdrawn when required without touching the capital sum. They will be informed at the end of each financial year of the total amount standing to their credit.

A feature which appeals to many members is that although the minimum subscription on partly paid-up shares is 2s., they can pay what they like in excess and vary it to suit themselves. Similarly, a borrower whose mortgage repayment is, say, £4 per month can pay any amount in addition without giving notice.

The object of the Society is to be of the greatest service to N.A.L.G.O. members for investment and house purchase. It has endeavoured to formulate a scheme combining all the advantages of the Building Society movements and the decision of the members will be reflected in the support they give to it.

Intending borrowers are requested to allow as much time as possible between the date of making application and the date on which they wish the mortgage completed. The property has to be surveyed, the application considered by the Committee, and then passed over to the Solicitors to do the necessary legal work.

The Society's Solicitors are always prepared to act for the borrower as well as the Society. It helps to reduce the borrower's expenses at an expensive time.

SOLUTION

CROSSWORD No. 18.

(See cover iii)

Across.—1. Spring. 4. Autumn. 7. Peartrees. 9. Deem. 10. Stud. 11. Henna. 13. Listen. 14. Scenic. 15. Jampot. 17. Borage. 19. Donor. 20. Root. 22. Adit. 23. Nurseries. 24. Summer. 25. Winter.

Down—1. Sandal. 2. Item. 3. Garden. 4. Aprons. 5. Ties. 6. Nordic. 7. Persimmon. 8. Standards. 11. Herod. 12. Actor. 15. Juries. 16. Towser. 17. Borrow. 18. Esther. 21. Tuum. 22. Aeon.

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MOVEMENTS OF MEMBERS

Mr. William Forsyth, A.S.A.A., A.I.M.T.A., Principal Accountancy Assistant, City Treasurer's Department, Carlisle, has been appointed Borough Accountant to the ancient Borough of Conway.

Dr. E. J. O'Keeffe, Assistant M.O.H. and S.M.O. for Leigh, Lancs, has been appointed in a similar capacity under the West Suffolk C.C., and commenced duties on September 1.

Recent changes in the services of which the Editor has received notification are as follow :—

Miss B. H. Adams, Kesteven, Assistant Matron, E. Sussex C.C. G. Atterbury, Wellingborough, Clerk's Office, Oxford C.C. E. Austrin, Lowestoft, Ledger Clerk, Wandsworth B.C.

F. J. Bailey, Gravesend, Chief Rates Clerk, Stepney.

F. E. Capper, Bletchley, Clerk, Hazel Grove. J. Carey, Walsall, Relieving Officer, Lancs. C.C. M. W. Cook, Blackpool, Auditor's Assistant, Middlesex C.C. G. Crossley, Bradford, Assistant Architect, Huddersfield.

E. E. Davey, East Sussex, Assistant to Settlement Officer, Kent C.C. R. G. Davey, Somerset, General Clerk, Severn Catchment Board. W. Dootson, Reigate, Borough Treasurer, Richmond (Yorks.).

Mr. Evans, Bury, Accountant, Caernarvon.

Miss F. Fur, Huddersfield, Matron, Haverfordwest.

A. B. Glasspool, Doncaster, Accountant and Rating Officer, Ormskirk. J. A. Green, West Bromwich, Master Local Institution, Lindsey C.C.

A. H. Hampton, Eastbourne, Valuation Officer, Lymington (Hants.). D. A. Healey, Manchester, Burnside Institution, Sheffield. E. A. Holman, Reigate, Assistant Rating Officer, Caterham and Warlingham. F. G. and D. A. Howes, Gloucester Master and Matron. E. H. Hudson, Moseley, Somerset C.C., Surveyor, Newbury.

P. Jarvis, Twickenham, Finance Department, P.A. Branch, Middlesex C.C.

E. C. Kipping, Leyton, Sanitary Inspector, Walton-on-Thames.

R. L. Leighton, Hastings, Cemetery Registrar, Birmingham. A. H. London, Eastbourne, Valuation Officer, Kensington. G. Longley, Greenwich, Assistant Sanitary Inspector, Ploughley R.D.C.

J. V. Morley, Somerset, Clerk, Kensington. H. R. Murphy, St. Mary's Hospital, Probationer Male Nurse, Hackney Hospital.

A. P. Oswin, Coventry, Clerk, Bullingdon R.D.C.

F. E. Peacock, East Sussex, Clerk in City Accountant's Department, Oxford C.C.

E. H. Ritchie, West Bromwich, Master's Clerk and Storekeeper, Lancaster Institution, Lancs. C.C.

H. Sargeant, Coventry, Deputy Librarian, Portsmouth. W. J. Snelling, Oxford C.C., Assistant Relieving Officer, Poole.

C. W. Thomas, Rotherham, Deputy Treasurer, Dagenham, U.D.C. R. J. Tressie, Bucks C.C., Internal Audit Clerk, Devon C.C. J. C. Tully, Batley, Parks Superintendent, Rochdale.

E. G. Whiting, Gravesend, Resigned. W. C. Willis, Basingstoke, Clerk, Houghton-le-Spring. G. H. R. Wilson, Gateshead, Deputy Town Clerk, Guildford.

SERVICE CONDITIONS AND SALARIES

THE *Wembley U.D.C.* at its July meeting reviewed the scheme of salary deductions adopted in January last for six months, and on the suggestion of the local branch decided to continue the scheme until December 31, when it will again be reviewed. The council recorded on the minutes its appreciation of the action of the staff.

Holborn Council has allowed the temporary deduction of 5 per cent. on all salaries to terminate and instead has adopted a graduated scheme as applicable to the staff of the London County Council, which is more advantageous to those with salaries up to £500 p.a.

Exeter City Council has reconsidered the scale of salary deductions and has adopted one more favourable to the staff. It will operate from October 1 for a period of twelve months, after which the deductions are to cease automatically, subject to the over-riding consideration of the national financial position.

Transport Staff Salaries

After hearing the representations made on behalf of the staff by the Divisional Organising Secretary the *Tees-side Railless Traction Board* decided to defer consideration of proposed reductions in salaries until the next meeting.

At *Hull*, owing to reorganisation, a number of members in the City Engineer's Department have received notice of termination of their appointments. An appeal on behalf of one of the officers concerned has been lodged.

At *South Shields* a deputation consisting of the Chairman and Secretary of the Branch (Mr. J. Lincoln and Mr. J. Y. Fawcett), together with the D.O.S., have had an interview with the Finance Committee on the question of a scale of salaries for junior clerks. The Committee decided to obtain additional information, and to consider the matter further at their next meeting.

An application on behalf of three inspectors in the Cleansing Department, *Wigan*, to be classified as officials and to participate in the twelve working days annual summer leave has been successful.

Diploma Grants

The *Widnes* Council has agreed to make grants equal to one-half (not exceeding £15) of the tuition fees of two members of the Municipal Staff other than a member receiving a similar grant from the Widnes and District Branch of N.A.L.G.O.) who may desire to obtain the Diploma in Public Administration of the University of Liverpool.

The Negotiating Committee of the *Liverpool* Branch continues its excellent work on behalf of the officials through discussions with representatives of the City Council. The current issue of the Branch Journal contains an interesting record of many subjects discussed at a meeting held on May 9 last.

TERMS OF STABILISATION

The following circular has been issued to local authorities:

Circular 1286.

Local Authorities.

Ministry of Health,
Whitehall, S.W.1.
August 15, 1932.

SIR,

I am directed by the Minister of Health to refer to the Circular Letter No. 1255 addressed to you on March 7 last and to state that the Minister has been furnished by the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury with a copy of a Memorandum dated July 1, 1932, incorporating an Agreement of the National Whitley Council for the Administrative and Legal Departments of the Civil Service relating to the remuneration of

MR. HAROLD AYREY
New Town Clerk, South Shields.

officers within the scope of the Council who have hitherto been in receipt of bonus under the Civil Service Cost-of-living Agreement on May 8, 1920, or have been remunerated on inclusive rates dependent upon changes in the official cost-of-living index figure.

A copy of the Memorandum is enclosed herewith.

It will be seen that, subject to the contingencies indicated in the Memorandum, the effect of the decision is to extend until the 1st April, 1934, the operation of the Circular Letter of March 7, last.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
R. H. H. KEENLYSIDE,
Assistant Secretary.

To the Clerk to the Authority.

The Memorandum of July 1 referred to above is not reprinted, its terms being set out in our August issue, page 531.

The Official Side of the Civil Service National Whitley Council, in the Memorandum, placed on record that the arrangements must be regarded as subject at all stages to the over-riding consideration of the national financial position.

The Ministry's circular No. 1255, to which reference is made, intimated that the rate of Civil Service bonus payable on the basis of an average cost-of-living figure of 50 would remain in operation for six months from March 1 to August 31, 1932.

SCOTTISH NEWS

By the D.O.S.

IN the midst of holidays one is apt to lead the life of contemplation rather than that of action. The life of contemplation has its charms—Bernard Shaw thinks it the life of heaven—but one can find little joy in pondering the tremendous problems which confront society in these difficult days. Those with the same economic interest ought to band themselves together. A united membership of 100 per cent. is essential. It seems an inexplicable thing that in these difficult times any Local Government official should remain out of the membership of N.A.L.G.O. An appeal will be issued shortly to all the non-members in Scotland. It will be the duty of every member to back up that appeal. Experience has shown that the mere sending out of propaganda circulars or the holding of propaganda meetings are of no use in themselves. The circulars and the meetings, no doubt, create an interest and stimulus, but only fructify when those members, fully conscious of the situation, get hold of the non-members with whom they are in daily contact and persuade them to play their part in a united effort.

Economy Committee for Scotland

The Department of Health for Scotland has appointed an Economy Committee, the members of which are as follows: Chairman, Lord Lovat; vice-chairman, Sir Henry Keith; County Council representatives, Messrs. Ian Carmichael, Lanarkshire, and J. M. Hodge, Perthshire; Convention of Burghs representatives, Provost Henry Smith, Kilmarnock, and Provost Rutherford, Kirkintilloch; City representatives: Treasurer Gumley, Edinburgh, Treasurer Morton, Glasgow, and Treasurer Lunan, Aberdeen. The Committee so far has had only one meeting, when a chairman and vice-chairman were appointed, and Mr. Seggie, of the Department of Health, was appointed secretary. Members may rest assured that we shall take more than a passing interest in the doings of this committee.

Glasgow Office Hours

A sub-committee of Glasgow Corporation recommended that the office hours for the staffs be from 9 a.m. to 5.15 p.m., with 1½ hours for lunch. At present the hours in the different departments are not uniform, but generally speaking they are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with 1½ hours for lunch. The Executive decided to oppose the retrograde proposal to increase the hours, as the existing arrangements had worked very well. Mr. Fox, General Organising Secretary, interviewed the Salaries and Wages Committee when the proposals came up for consideration. By seven votes to five the recommendations were carried. They are still subject to approval by the Council.

Attendance Officers

Attendance Officers are now getting anxious concerning a rumour that the coming economy proposals will include the abolition of their offices. These officers may rest assured that the Association will do whatever is possible in the matter, but we have already had occasion to point out that many of them are still outside our membership, despite the fact that repeated invitations have been made to them to join up.

Eleventh-hour conversions are apt to be suspect, but nevertheless the D.O.S. has agreed to meet a number of Attendance Officers early in September. Before then, we shall seek to discover the actual strength of attendance officers in the membership and whether we are in a position to speak for them as a whole.

BRANCH AND DISTRICT NEWS

SOUTH WESTERN DISTRICT

eneral Secretary Visits Torquay

Efforts are being made to impart increased nterest in the Torquay Branch and propaganda going on, which it is hoped will result in 00 per cent. membership. In this connection was fortunate that Mr. Hill, the general ecretary, was in Torquay and although on acation, he readily responded to a request to ddress the officers of the Corporation on the dvantages of membership of the Association. hose present were greatly interested and a vote f thanks was cordially extended to Mr. Hill. handicap Tennis Tournament has been rranged for which valuable prizes are being ffered, and a programme of social and other vents for the winter months is being prepared.

SOUTH WALES DISTRICT

Transferred Officers

Carmarthenshire C.C. has approved the ecommendation of its Public Assistance Committee to appoint Mr. Ernest Stone as Relieving Officer for a new district to be formed n the County. Mr. Stone has had ten years ervice as Collector of Unemployment Relief by way of loan. He was employed in the first place by the late Llanelly Board of Guardians nd was a Transferred Officer to the Public Assistance Committee in 1930. Mr. Alfred Williams has been appointed Superintendent of Unemployment Relief by way of loan, at an increased Salary. Mr. Williams also has had considerable experience and is a Transferred Officer from the late Llanelly Board of Guardians.

* * * *

The staff of Barry U.D.C. presented a gold wristlet watch to Mr. J. K. B. Howell on the occasion of his departure to take up an appointment as Accountancy Assistant under the Morecambe and Heysham B.C.

NORTH WESTERN and NORTH WALES DISTRICT

"Easterby" Golf Competition

The annual golf tournament for the "Easterby" Cup, open to members of the Lancashire County Branch, was played over the Ashton and Lea Links on August 9. There were twenty-eight entries and the winner of the Cup and first sweep was Mr. L. Roberts (Treasurer's Dept.) with a score of 83–14–69. Mr. J. Livingstone (Higher Education Dept.), last year's winner, took the second sweep with a score of 81–10–71.

NORTH WALES DISTRICT

Inter-Branch Sports

The annual tennis tournament was held on the Municipal Courts at Colwyn Bay on July 16. Nine Branches entered, the finalists being Colwyn Bay U.D.C. and Flintshire C.C. (Mold), the latter winning the "Shield," which was presented to the Mold Captain by Mrs. Hext, wife of the honorary district secretary. The visitors were entertained to tea by the Colwyn Bay Branch.

The annual bowls tournament followed on July 23, at Llay, Wrexham, four teams competing for the Trophy given by the Denbigh C.C. (Ruthin) Branch. This was secured by Colwyn Bay, the finalists in the Individual Merit Competition being C. T. Jones (Wrexham R.D.C.) 21, and George Williams (Hawarden and District Branch) 16. Trophy and prizes were presented to the winners by Mr. J. D. Jones (Rhyl), Chairman of Sports Committee. The visitors were entertained to tea by the Wrexham R.D.C. Branch.

MORECAMBE AND HEYSHAM

A general meeting of the Morecambe and Heysham Branch was held on Tuesday, July 26, to deal with the re-organisation. The following officers were elected: Mr. J. Entwistle (Town Clerk), president; Mr. H. D. Robertson (Committee Clerk), vice-president; Mr. G. Brown (Treasurer's department), treasurer; Jno. Kitchen (Treasurer's department), hon. secretary; Mr. William Smith, correspondent to Provident and Approved Society; Mr. C. Mayor and E. Hargreaves, hon. auditors.

OBITUARY

MR. EDWARD WILLIS

We deeply regret to announce that Mr. Edward Willis, Engineer, Surveyor, and Architect, Brentford and Chiswick U.D.C., passed away after a long illness. Mr. Willis has done some exceedingly good work on behalf of the Association, and has been acting as Director of Studies in connection with the N.A.L.G.O. Correspondence Institute, and members of N.A.L.G.O. will feel keenly his death and regret the loss of such a charming personality.

The Late MR. EDWARD WILLIS.
Engineer and Surveyor,
Brentford and Chiswick U.D.C.

Mr. Willis went to Willesden—his first municipal appointment—in 1895 as a junior in the building department and subsequently became chief building surveyor, chief engineering assistant, and assistant engineer. He was appointed as chief engineer and surveyor to the Chiswick U.D.C. and later of the united Brentford and Chiswick U.D.C.

Mr. Willis found expression for his great interest in the young officer in many ways. In addition to his work for N.A.L.G.O. already referred to, he was lecturer on sanitary science under the Brighton Corporation and was chief of the building department of the West Ham Technical Institute for many years. He was honorary examiner for the Chartered Surveyors' Institution, the Institution of Municipal and County Engineers, Town Planning Institute, Royal Sanitary Institute, and the Institute of Sanitary Engineers.

MR. W. ROBINSON

Heywood and District Officials have lost a good officer and friend by the sudden death of Mr. William Robinson, Chief Collector to the Heywood and Middleton Water Board and a member of the Branch.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY BRANCH

Juniors and Education

Lancashire County Branch has recently issued to all its members a special 18-page brochure on the subject of the training of Local Government Officers within the Service. Produced by the Branch Education Sub-Committee under the very able direction of Mr. J. E. Gee (Chairman) and Mr. W. F. Herbert, M.A., B.Sc. (Education Correspondent), this is a most interesting document which aims to assist and guide the younger members of the County Council Staff, to stimulate them to qualify for their special work by study and examination, and to help them to select the proper course of study, and the examinations most appropriate to their particular departments.

The brochure sets out briefly information as to N.A.L.G.O.'s Education Policy, its scope and advantages, and also gives particulars of suitable courses at the London and Manchester Universities.

The County Branch has appointed an Advisory Panel, representative of the various County Departments, to advise the younger members of the staff as to the most appropriate form of study and examination applicable to the work of their particular department.

NORTH EASTERN DISTRICT

Newcastle-on-Tyne Cricket

Teams fielded by the Sheriff of the City for the time being (this year, Councillor John Leadbitter, J.P.), and Mr. Norman Whitfield, a prominent figure in local cricket, participated in the Newcasle-upon-Tyne Branch annual cricket match in support of the B. & O. Fund. The representative elevens included Wilfred Rhodes and George Hirst, the famous Yorkshire-England pair; H. Gibbon (Durham), J. Carr (Blackhall), and S. Weaver (Newcastle United A.F.C.), and other County players.

Mr. Whitfield's XI, batting first, made 182 in two hours, and the Sheriff's XI (captained by Mr. W. H. L. Travers) took half an hour longer to score 255. The cricket was of a bright and interesting character. Six balls were knocked out of the ground, a young local player hitting two to the adjacent cemetery off the bowling of the veteran Rhodes.

After the match a cricket bat, autographed by the All-India players, Hirst, Rhodes, and many other cricketers of repute, was auctioned, and fetched £5 12s.

SCOTTISH DISTRICT

Annual Sports Day

Our annual sports day is to be held on September 17, at Bridge of Allan. The exception is the golf competition, which will be played on the Dunblane course. Golfers, therefore, will take their railway tickets to Dunblane, where they will be met by members of the Committee and directed to the golf course. After the match they will meet with the other competitors at the Allan Water and Spa Hotel for tea and the presentation of prizes. A record number of entries are anticipated, as is the patronage of a number of friends attending for the day's outing. Forms of entry can be obtained from branch secretaries or from Mr. S. H. Brodie, City Assessor's Department, 40 Cochrane Street, Glasgow, C.1. Visitors requiring lunch or tea at the hotel should notify Mr. Brodie, so that arrangements can be made. At the hotel the lunch is 3s. and tea 2s.

PARK HOSPITAL BRANCH

Members' cars carried a party of members of the Park Hospital (Flixton) Branch to Biddulph Orthopaedic Hospital, the run of seventy miles through delightful Cheshire countryside being enjoyed by all, as was the hospitality of the matron and staff. The cricket season closed successfully for the branch and the Social Sub-Committee is now busily preparing for the winter programme.

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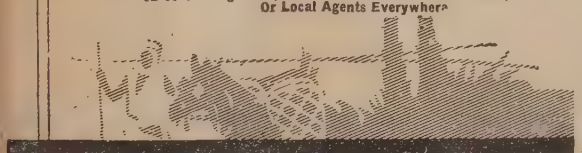

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AUCTION BRIDGE

By NEVILLE HOBSON

Sportsmanship

I concluded last month with a brief reference to the really sporting player, and it is proposed now to consider more fully the characteristics of the Bridge "Sportsman." Nothing is more delightful in Bridge than to meet a cheerful loser, but these are not so numerous as they should be, and human nature is such as to make it difficult to accept calmly the knocks of Fortune.

How often does one hear the complaint about not having had any cards all night, which is sometimes enlarged into the suggestion that a fair holding of cards is consistently denied; whereas, in point of fact, good and bad luck inevitably level themselves up fairly evenly throughout the year, particularly as regards the team.

I stress this reference to the team, as players are apt to discuss their luck without regard to the fact that their deficiences in such respect are usually made good by the superior fortune of their partners; and it is not unusual to hear a player bemoan his luck at the end of an evening when he is only a few hundred points down, from a team point of view, after two or three hours play.

If a player holds hands which are admittedly below the average and yet only loses a comparatively small margin, he should clearly be satisfied with the share of fortune which has fallen to his team (which includes his partner as well as himself), and—if his partner is fortunate enough to get several big counts during the session—surely they compensate for the relative disappointments as regards his own hand.

Let me, then, appeal to my readers for a real effort to smile, or, at least, remain unperturbed when things are going badly, and I would urge them to bear in mind the impropriety of referring to their heavy losses when the evening is only three-quarters through. How often do we hear a player, who has lost 4 rubbers out of 5, with about 3 more to be played, railing at Fate and, in effect, asking for the sympathy of the opponents, when an hour and a quarter later he has won the last three rubbers and is actually on the credit side and taking toll from those whose condolences he was seeking earlier in the evening.

In the realm of Golf it is a tradition to hope for the assistance of Dame Fortune when one is three down with five holes to go, and many a game has been halved, and even won, from that score, owing to things beginning to go the other way. Similarly, in Bridge this spirit of optimism should always prevail, and players should at least decide not to wail until the evening's play is finished. Then, and then only, is it logical to complain if one really feels entitled to do so, but I would again emphasise the inspiration derived from meeting the really sporting player, who recognises the pleasure it gives to his opponents to receive congratulations upon a success in which good luck appears to have played a prominent part. Incidentally, so-called bad luck is, in numerous cases, another name for bad play!

Let me conclude with an apt quotation from Byron's "Don Juan":—

"In play there are two pleasures for your choosing
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SOLUTION

CHESS

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM NO. 20

1, Q—R7, P—Kt5; 2, Q—R4ch, K x P; 3, P—K4 mate.

If 1, P—Q3; 2, Q—K3ch, K x P; 3, Q—K6 mate.

If 1, P x Kt; 2, Q x P, P—B6; 3, P x P mate.

Comment—Key obscure, and the two mates by P are delightful, particularly so the mate by P x P, which is a model mate.

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM NO. 20a

1, K—B6; R x Kt; 2, Q—QB5 mate.

If 1, R x P; 2, R—R5 mate.

Comment—The key, otherwise good, is rather suggested by Black's Kt moves.

SOLUTION TO END GAME NO. 20

WHITE	BLACK
1. R—QR6	P—Kt6
2. K—B6	K—Ktsq
3. R—R3	P—B5
4. R—R5	P—B6
5. R—Kt5ch	K—Bsq
6. R—R5	K—Kt5q
7. R—Kt5ch	K—Bsq
8. R—R5	K—Qsq
9. K—Q6	Draw
If 4.	P—R8(Q)
5. R x Q	P—Kt7
6. R—Rsq	P—B6
7. K—Kt6	

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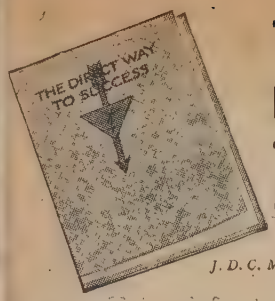

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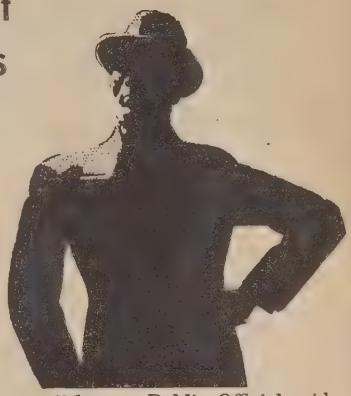
The man who thought he was clever



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"By Touché"

HAVE you noticed of late an extraordinary tendency to widen the bounds of the English language? I do not mean the bounds of profane language—well, not necessarily, though in that direction, especially by women, there has been a marked growth. This is, no doubt, another side of the growing independence of women, and the increase of strong language by the fair sex is about keeping time with their consumption of cigarettes, its use being probably more common to-day by women than at any time during the past two hundred years. Bless 'em! "Once our superiors, now our equals" as someone has well said. No doubt they do create a charming feeling of camaraderie—there was the lady up to whose car I crept rather slowly on my motor-bicycle the other day. Quite unprovoked she leaned over the side of her car and said calmly: "Where the h—— do you think you are coming to?"

ED.: "Er——"

T.: "Sorry."

ED.: "Where *are* you going to?"

T.: "One moment."

ED.: "Brrr!"

But I was referring to the growing insolence of the circles interested in sociology, biology, and indeed most of the 'ologies in presuming to evolve a vocabulary of their own. The terms of precise definition which they create for their own use may be an advantage, but the result is that the ordinary semi-scientific book formerly within the mental grasp of an intelligent layman has become to him almost meaningless. Anthropology appears to be the latest area to be undermined. A recently published book on Melanesia which I found otherwise absorbingly interesting, was almost spoiled——

ED.: "Excuse me, this will not do at all. What on earth has anthropology to do with the Local Government Service?"

T.: "A reasonable question—a most reasonable question. At the moment the answer is a secret. You may well wonder what interest such a subject as anthropology has for men and women to whom Councillors and Aldermen are a constant study, but a little patience and the secret will be unveiled to your astonished gaze."

ED.: "I must protest. Do you not understand that you are invited to contribute a column 'In Lighter Vein' for this issue?"

T.: "Oh, yes."

ED.: "I doubt whether you really do. We must come to some understanding, and avoid these repeated interruptions in the flow of your—er—er——"

T.: "Winged words?"

ED.: "No."

T.: "Polished style?"

ED.: "No."

T.: "Talented humour?"

ED.: "*No.*"

T.: "Hang it all! Find your own word."

ED.: "What I want to say is that there have been far too many interruptions in the course of your contributions."

T.: "Yes."

ED.: "We must take steps to avoid them."

T.: "Yes, well——"

ED.: "I should like to explain to you once more what it is you are supposed to be writing."

T.: "Yes; I thought——"

ED.: "What I want is a contribution that is at once firm but plastic in its texture, and with a lighter touch than the rest of the paper. It is——"

T.: "That will be quite easy, if I may say so without rudeness. If——"

ED.: "We want something combining strength and lightness; a kind of——"

T.: "Aluminium?"

ED.: "Please try to realise that this is a serious matter. I find it difficult to make you appreciate the need for discipline in the control of a paper of this kind. Editing a newspaper is a grave matter——"

T.: "Yes?"

ED.: "You should ask yourself—what do our readers want?"

T.: "I can tell you. This ten per cent. cut——"

ED.: "You should put to yourself the question—what do they want? and if you examine the position you will see that our success depends on our finding the correct answer to that question."

T.: "Yes. If I were Editor——"

ED.: "Well, I hope I have not spoken to you in vain. I have no desire to be harsh——"

T.: "Oh, no!"

ED.: "I am not unreasonable——"

T.: "Oh, no!"

ED.: "But firm. I must insist on directing the policy of the paper. I do not think that anthropology is a subject at all likely to attract our readers."

T.: "I think——"

ED.: "Please get on with the job."

T.: "Phew! Now where the—er—where had I got to? Oh! Of course I had no intention of discussing anthropology with you at any length, but there is a definite point at which the interest of local government officers is likely to be aroused. If you take the case of——"

PRINTER: "Pardon me. I can only give you one more line, you have already exceeded your space."

T.: "Grrr!"

IT HAPPENED IN THE OFFICE

Here is the first selection of short Humorous Items received from readers.

The "Skeleton" Staff

It was at the Sanitary Committee, and the Cemetery Superintendent was applying for permission for his staff to be given leave for a half-day in order to go for a "Beano."

"But how will you manage at the cemetery that day," asked one of the members of the committee, "if your staff are away?"

"Oh," said the Superintendent, "I had intended to provide a 'skeleton' staff."—*Anon.*

* * *

Weight and See

NEW ASSISTANT (*Who has been engaged, together with an Inspector, for the past three hours, in tracking down a coal hawker with numerous convictions for short-weight coal, on a cold wintry afternoon*): "Well, this is about the limit. When I became an assistant I didn't bargain for this. It appears to me that it's all 'wait' and no 'measure.'"

INSPECTOR: "Ah! We shall wait (weigh it) and see!"—*R. G. Morris, Weights and Measures Office, Shire Hall, Nottingham.*

Ambitious

A Lancashire U.D.C. recently advertised for a boy to help in the cemetery. The following is one of the applications received by the Surveyor: "Dear Sir, I beg to apply for the vacant place in the graveyard.—Yours truly," *A. Clitherol, 1 Morrison Street, Bolton, Lancs.*

* * *

Degree of Urgency

JUNIOR OFFICER: "Here's an application for the removal of a patient to hospital. It's marked urgent."

SENIOR OFFICER: "Is it really urgent?"

JUNIOR OFFICER: "Yes, the fellow died yesterday."—*Anon.*

* * *

It Was Not To Be

MAYOR: "I will now ask you to drink to the health of our good townsman, Peter Potter, on my right, who is leaving us. He was born here, he was married here, and we all hoped that he would die here. But it was not to be."—*Anon.*

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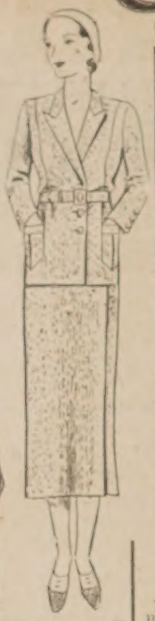

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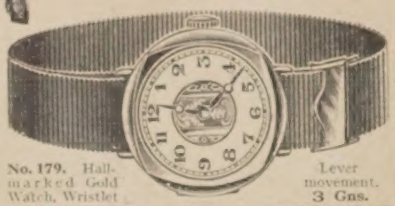

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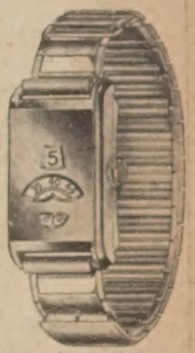

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